

GCSE (9–1)

Examiners' report

**HISTORY A
(EXPLAINING THE
MODERN WORLD)**

J410

For first teaching in 2016

J410/10 Summer 2022 series

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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

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Paper 10 series overview

Paper 10 is War and British Society c.790 to c.2010.

To perform well on the British thematic study, candidates need to apply their knowledge and understanding to identify and explain the causes and impact of war on people and society including the analysis of a significant event.

Successful candidates responded well to the challenges the paper presented and had a secure grasp of the chronology of conflict. Their grasp of the detail of many wars was excellent. Candidates' learning is examined through question questions asking for recall, causation, significance and analysis of an issue over two periods as set out in the specification. These skills focus on Assessment Objectives 1 and 2; demonstrating knowledge and understanding, as well as explaining and analysing historical events.

Candidates' responses spanned a wide range of ability and it was clear that candidates had been well prepared, demonstrating an understanding of the 'broad sweep' of this specification. Marks were awarded across the entire mark range for all four questions.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally did the following:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • used examples, issues and events relevant to the time periods examined by the question (Questions 1-4) • had a secure grasp of the chronology of conflict • managed their time effectively, balancing their responses proportionally to the mark allocations for each of the questions (especially important for Question 4) • established clear explanatory links back to the issues in the questions (Questions 2-4) • displayed an understanding of how historians assess significance (Question 3) • had a clear grasp of the key concepts required from study of the specification (such as the different reasons for and causes of wars over time (Question 4). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • offered material that was outside the chronological scope of the question (especially Question 1 and Question 4) • displayed less secure historical knowledge, for example by confusing information about wars that were less relevant to the question (Question 4) • described and identified issues without analysing them for cause, impact or significance (Questions 2-4) • left insufficient time to offer a fully developed response to Question 4 • offered responses to Question 4 that were unbalanced, whether by looking at only one side of the argument or considering only one of the two relevant time periods.

Question 1

1 Describe **two** examples of how the First World War affected the civilian population.

[4]

Most candidates found this question accessible and were able to achieve at least 2 marks. Many different examples were acceptable and an extra mark was given for supporting detail. The latest published mark scheme illustrates in detail common identifications.

In answering, many candidates focused on conscription and rationing. They were able to add detail about when the measures were introduced and the impact they had. Some responses were very specific and were able to identify zeppelin bombing and their targets. More unusual were responses focused on DORA but they were generally very successful, often citing censorship as an impact.

Less successful attempts tended to focus on the impact on soldiers as opposed to civilians, although even here credit could be secured through comments about shell-shock.

The weakest responses were often very general, describing loss or grief. Alternatively they described 'bombing', a term which could be applied to either First or Second World War. This needed to be rooted in a comment about its target or loss of life to be rewarded above 1 mark, in other words, correctly located as a feature of the First World War.

Advice for Question 1

Centres are encouraged to make sure students focus on examples that are specific, and develop each in a sentence.

Exemplar 1

1		Civilians were effected in the first world war because of food shortages, $\frac{2}{3}$ of Britains food at the time was imported, and so it was hard to get merchant ships to bring food in. Another way civilians were effected was zeppelin bombings and attacks from German warships at places like Scarborough.
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Exemplar 1 gains full marks with a succinct paragraph. The second example of bombing is securely located in the First World War through the mention of 'zeppelin' and 'warships' and the target of Scarborough gives further detail.

Question 2

2 Explain how William I was able to keep England under control.

[8]

This question was generally tackled very well and most candidates achieved 4 marks or more. They did this by providing an example of a specific method, giving a little detail about it, and then using this to explain how this achieved control. Candidates who repeated this for a different reason were credited in Level 4.

For example, many candidates focused on castles and the way in which they were built rapidly across the countryside. They were able to explain how this secured control through intimidation and also deterred invaders. Others focused on the Harrying of the North or William's general campaigns of brutal intimidation in the south before his coronation, and as well as describing these, explained that this brutality caused fear which made rebellion less likely. Others focused on replacing Anglo-Saxon landowners with loyal Norman barons. Some sophisticated arguments linked a number of methods to attacks on Anglo-Saxon culture. Whichever the focus, many were able to develop one or more of these reasons into explanations for higher marks.

The feudal system was often focused on but was handled less well. Some candidates 'got lost' in its detail or were confused about whether its focus was land or money: some described financial payments in return for land. More successful were responses about the change in ownership of land which enabled William to trust regional lords. Equally, the Domesday Book was often cited as a method of control. Of course, that this took place at the end of William's reign is one issue. Another is that candidates have to work hard to explain how knowledge was power in Norman England, and how knowing more enabled him to tax more - a form of control. However, this is quite a long chain of reasoning and many candidates ended up not achieving explanation with this focus as they drifted into description.

Overall, even candidates who struggled on other questions tended to be able to answer this one well.

Advice for Question 2

Candidates are most successful on this question when they identify a factor, add detail and then consciously link to the issue in the question to explain.

This question is examined in the same way as Question 2 and Question 6 on Paper 1 and candidates should be encouraged to adopt the same approach.

Exemplar 2

2	<p>William kept England under control by through the Harrying of the North^{in 1068}. After northern English Barons rose up against Norman rule in England with the support of the Scots and the Danes (whom William eventually paid off) William sent his men to burn and destroy all crops and fields and ransack villages, this left the people in a 3 year famine and even can be seen today as the Northern England is generally poorer than the south. This display of brutal control from William showed he was tough and shouldn't be crossed, this helped him keep control in the future as people were afraid of what he'd do.</p> <p>William also kept control through castles. William built ^{around} 3,000 castles in England, which which served multiple purposes. They acted as intimidators to the villages they overlooked and they were stationed tactically across the country so William could quickly react to any uprisings or problems in the country and could respond quickly, similar to the 600 pele towers built for the Anglo-Scottish conflict much later on. These castles enforced Norman rule and helped William maintain control over England.</p>
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Exemplar 2 shows a response which gains full marks with two explained points. The first explanation is particularly strong. Despite minor errors in the second point, enough explanation is offered to also be fully credited within the level.

Question 3

- 3 How significant was the impact of the Civil Wars of 1642 to 1651 on the people of England, Scotland and Ireland?

[14]

Question 3 requires candidates to structure a response around the concept of significance. This was done much more successfully than in previous years when candidates tended to explain changes and not significance.

This year many candidates were able to describe impacts of the Civil Wars and then develop this into significance. The most common lines of argument were the sheer scale of physical destruction which was often compared to the World Wars to make the point about significance of scale, and the impact on Ireland which was often linked to on-going problems, most notably The Troubles. Others made valid points about political long term consequences of a period without a monarchy. Most candidates who discussed this successfully argued that even after Restoration, the Monarchy was constrained by the power of Parliament, although some argued the significance was that the Cromwellian experiment put people off Republicanism and ensured the long term survival of monarchy. Either argument was valid as significance. Other approaches were successful discussing the breadth of geographical impacts given that this was a 'Britain' wide conflict and its nature affected all different classes, shown by the employment of clubmen to keep soldiers from looting villages.

Far fewer responses were kept in Level 1 this year as most had valid points to make about the civil wars, although we were looking for specific knowledge to credit beyond Level 1.

Advice for Question 3

Significance requires candidates to address impact over time or scale in a meaningful way. This was usually demonstrated at the start and end of a paragraph where some sort of overarching theme or statement of significance was given to 'frame' the point being made. This should then be accompanied by explanation and sufficient factual support to address the issue.

Exemplar 3

3	<p>The English Civil War can can be seen as significant in the short term, due to a huge loss of life, causing a detrimental impact on the people of England, Scotland and Ireland. Throughout the 9 years, over 180,000 people died, 3.6% of the population which is a higher percentage of the population than than WWI, meaning the English Civil War was the deadliest war in England, larger This is particularly true due to the geographical location, as this was the first war fought on English soil. The Civil War was very significant in the short term, causing a huge psychological and physical destruction of lives and affected the whole population, as well as life in Scotland and Ireland because the Royalists had recruited Irish soldiers to fight for them.</p>
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Exemplar 3 explains significance in a very successful way, with this paragraph alone receiving most of the marks available. There is a clear sense of the breadth and scale of impact, compared to other wars as well as the geographical reach.

Question 4*

4* 'Between 1500 and 2010 wars were fought to control overseas territory.'
How far do you agree?

[24]

Question 4 requires candidates to consider a statement across two of the three study periods and offer explained examples of how the statement could be both supported and challenged. Four explained examples covering both sides of the argument and both time periods opens up the higher mark band in Level 4.

This question was answered far better than its equivalent in 2019. The most common argument was to suggest that the statement was largely true for 'Wars of Empire' and candidates were able in particular to use the 7 Years' War and imperial growth, and the Boer War and diamonds, to argue for wars being motivated by territory. They then went on to argue that this was less true either before, when wars were more motivated by defence/religion in the Early Modern period and after, when in the 20th century wars were more motivated by defence and ideology. Some candidates did fall into the trap of only explaining wars from the Modern period, which resulted in their marks being capped at the top of Level 4. However, most attempted wars from both periods.

One issue seemed to be candidates interpreting the question simply in terms of where war was fought: a few candidates argued that territory was the main reason for most wars because they were fought abroad, but there were a few that weren't, such as the Civil Wars or the Jacobite Rebellions, because they were fought in the British Isles. As long as this was developed to explain the motivation behind the wars this approach was acceptable. However, given that this paper is focused on war and British society, candidates who focused on wars that Britain were not involved in were not given credit for those points.

Few candidates struggled to answer across the period: most candidates at least discussed Elizabeth's wars, and then wars from later periods. A high number of candidates were able to give a clinching argument in order to access the top of the level.

Advice for Question 4

Candidates should be in the habit of picking and explaining examples from across the periods when they complete practice responses.

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