Qualification Accredited



A LEVEL

Examiners' report

HISTORY A

H505

For first teaching in 2015

Y306/01 Summer 2023 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.

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Paper Y306/01 series overview

Y306 is one of twenty one units for Paper 3 of the revised A Level examination for GCE History. This unit tests an extended period of History of at least one hundred years through an interpretation option on a named in-depth topic and two essays. The paper is divided into two sections. In Section A candidates are required to use contextual knowledge to test the views of two historians about one of the three named in-depth topics or an aspect of one. The question does not require them to comment on the style of writing or the provenance of the interpretation. In Section B candidates are required to answer two essay questions from a choice of three.

Candidates who did well on this paper Candidates who did less well on this paper generally: generally: showed a clear understanding of the views of showed a limited understanding of one or both the two interpretations in relation to the of the interpretations question did not go beyond a basic explanation of part of the interpretation were able to use contextual knowledge to test the Interpretations, linking that knowledge did not link any contextual knowledge directly directly to the interpretation through evaluative to the Interpretation and therefore did not words evaluate the interpretation were able to consider both the strengths and in responding to the essay adopted a limitations of both interpretations using chronological rather than thematic approach contextual knowledge did not make links or comparisons even if covered the whole period in a balanced way events from different parts of the period were discussed in the same paragraph adopted a thematic approach made links and comparisons between aspects did not cover the whole period of the topic did not focus on the precise wording of the explained the links and comparisons question supported their arguments with precise and made unsupported comments about issues relevant examples which were no more than assertions. reached a supported judgement about the issue in the question.

Section A overview

To do well on Section A, candidates need to explain the view of each interpretation in relation to the question and then evaluate the interpretation by the application of contextual knowledge. Responses should show an understanding of the wider debate connected to the issue.

Question 1

1 Evaluate the interpretations in **both** of the two passages and explain which you think is more convincing as an explanation of the nature and scale of Tyrone's rebellion. [30]

The two passages required candidates to consider the nature and scale of Tyrone's rebellion. Interpretation A put forward the view that the unrest was a response to the centralisation and religious policies of the English and that the rebels wanted to remove the English settlers and Anglo-Irish administration and achieve independence, as shown in the last line of the passage. The Interpretation also argued that it was a nationwide revolt. Interpretation B put forward the view that it began as a regional rising but developed because of Spanish intervention and focused on the motives of Tyrone. There were a large number of candidates that did not focus on the nature of the rising, writing instead about the causes, and while this was rewarded, the higher levels were reserved for responses that focused on the precise demands of the question. Some candidates also ignored the issue of 'scale' and even when it was discussed, were unable to compare the different views of the two passages. However, candidates who did focus on the demands of the question, were able to evaluate the interpretations.

In many instances the focus when evaluating Interpretation A was on the impact of the Plantations and the desire to see them removed, while other candidates commented on how English policies of centralisation threatened the traditional clan power and wanted to reverse the tendencies. Some candidates compared developments in Ireland to northern England and the rebellion of the Northern Earls. Interpretation A also mentioned that Tyrone was brought up in England and this was often used as an issue to be discussed, but some candidates found it more difficult to link this to either the nature or scale of the rebellion.

In evaluating Interpretation B, most candidates picked up on the development of unrest mentioned in the opening of the passage. However, there were only a few candidates that considered the following element where Guy considers the objective of liberty of conscience. Candidates who were aware of Tyrone's demands did use them to discuss the nature of the unrest and consider not only the religious objectives but also the political. Candidates were often able to use the details of Tyrone's offensive to argue that the scale of the rising must have been such that it allowed him to attack English defences. The majority of responses focused on the issue of Spanish involvement, and this was evaluated with knowledge of the size of the Spanish force to argue that the scale was indeed large, and that unrest had now become more than just a national rising. Other responses also mentioned the number of troops that Elizabeth had to send to deal with the problem to show that the rising was indeed large, although some candidates argued that once Mountjoy arrived the rising was crushed suggesting the scale was less threatening.

5

Exemplar 1

Passage A deems the nature of Tyrone's rebellion as
an expression of discontent towards English me
an expression of discontent towards English me and that it was a rebellion of regional scale where all of Ireland was walling to rebell agrass the English administration. Passage B agraes that
of Ireland was nathing to rebel agrant the
English administration. Passage B agrees that
it was too a regional wrising though limited in Uster, but Gry acknowledges and between it was under the stirring of span that the rebellion
Otter, but Gray acknowledges and between it was
under the stirring of from that the rebellion
escapted into a massive water one. The usay
will conclude that Woodward is more convincing
Woodward is accurate in expanation of the nature
and scale of Tyrone's rebellion as he explained
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how Typones escalated into a popular revolt whereas thus is not explicit in Guys interpretation.
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Passage A Woodward believes it is the oppressive rule
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The Judoris he writes lead previleges west may be
traditional practices eroded. This is true as since
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Gaelic chiefs, the uneven distribution of gatronage also
broke traditions and thus supports his daim.
Moreover, he also writes about the new plantations
Moreover, he also writes about the new plantations where Inglish colonisers had been exploiting the
broke traditions and thus supports his claim. Moreover, he also writes about he new plantations where Inglish colonisers had been exploiting the locals. This is supported by when I izabeth granted
broke traditions and thus suports his claim. Moreover, he also writes about the new plantations where Inglish colonisers had been exploiting the locals. This is supported by when I lizabeth franted lands to men like smith & Devireus, Smith
Aproper, he also writes about the new plantations where Inglish colonisers had been exploiting the locals. This is supported by when I jirabeth granted lands to men like smith & Devireus, Smith

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the mass rich the establishment of Profestant Churches at the especie of Copyright Churches
argument to make as most major rebellions of
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moring springs confier in trafand as the leaders whe shape declared to be the defender of the true tath All these supports Woodnerds interpretation that Typone's us indeed one
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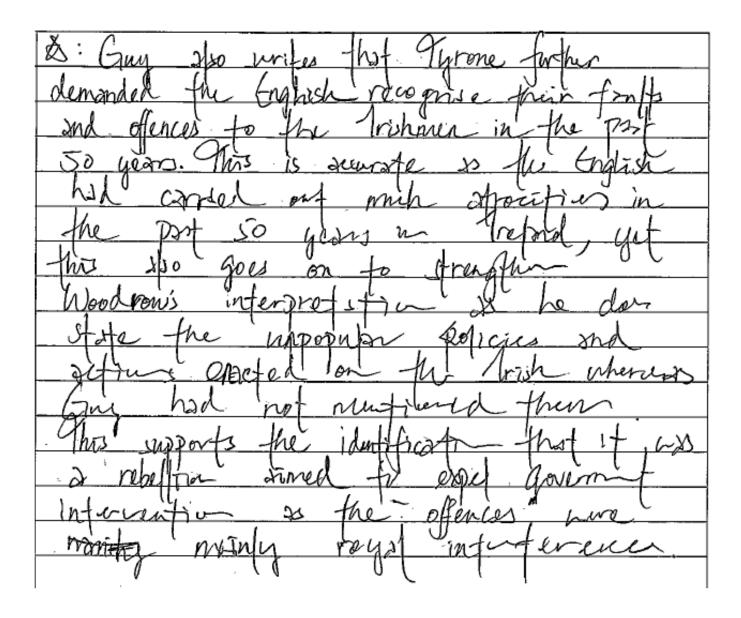
121
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grandstather However, Woodward unites that
Tyrone hid interped attacks from other
dons which could undermine his
interpretation that the entire trained supported
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everyday (wes of an Irish, and when a
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Exemplar 1 provides an example of a response that was placed in Level 5. There is some evaluation and use of contextual knowledge to test the interpretation, but to reach Level 6 there needed to be greater focus and consistency of evaluation with a more developed judgement.

Assessment for learning



Candidates should be made aware that they need to focus on the issue in the question and not simply evaluate all elements in the interpretation. Candidates need to ask themselves what the view of each passage about the issue raised is. In this instance the nature and scale of the rising.

Misconception



There is a difference between nature and cause of a rising. Issues that might be considered under the term nature are identified in the specification.

Section B overview

To do well on Section B, candidates need to make connections and links across the whole period, explaining similarities and differences between the events they are discussing in order to show an awareness of continuity and change across the whole period unless instructed otherwise. The comparisons made may be either between periods within the topic or between regions. The strongest responses will test a hypothesis and reach a supported judgement.

Question 2*

2* 'Political issues were the main cause of unrest throughout the period from 1485 to 1603.' How far do you agree?
[25]

Question 2 required candidates to weigh up political issues as a cause of unrest against factors, such as religion and social and economic, and reach a supported judgement as to which was the most important cause throughout the period. There were a number of possible approaches that were taken. Some candidates took an overall view and argued that political causes were a presence throughout the period and therefore could be considered the most important as other causes, such as religion, were present only at particular times. However, some candidates argued that the main cause changed during the period, often arguing that political factors were the main cause at the beginning and end but religious and social/economic were more important in the middle period. If this approach was taken there still needed to be a focus on 'throughout the period'. However, the strongest responses argued that even during a period where religion and social and economic issues may have been the main cause there were political elements, such as in the Pilgrimage of Grace, Kett's (with local government) and the Northern Earls.

The weakest responses simply went through the period in chronological order. Here candidates commented on the causes of unrest during the reign of each monarch. Frequently there were thematic approaches that did not explain the causes of the rebellions discussed, but simply asserted they were political or religious etc. Furthermore, this approach made no comparison but listed rebellions.

Exemplar 2

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Ugott as nell as Northern Emps in 1569. Il of these, except for Keff's was sinced to overfrom the
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This exemplar for Question 2 is an illustration of a response that was given full marks. Not only is there a high level of synthesis running throughout the essay but there is also judgement. The response displays a high level of supporting knowledge to produce a convincing argument.

Assessment for learning



Synthesis is crucial for reaching Levels 5 and 6. This does not simply involve a thematic approach, nor stating that issues are similar/different. Candidates need to explain how the issues being discussed are either similar or different. Thinking in terms of comparing point by point might help.

Question 3 *

3* 'The nature of rebellions changed considerably after 1549.' How far do you agree?

[25]

Although Question 3 was not as popular as Question 2, there were still a large number of responses. As with Question 1, much depended on whether candidates understood what is meant by nature. Some candidates saw it as another causation question. However, those who focused on nature considered a good range of issues, most frequently the size, frequency, composition, objective and location of rebellions. Candidates who followed these themes were often successful in comparing the situation preand post-1549 and therefore demonstrated synthesis, but once again, precise knowledge was essential in order to support the argument. The majority of candidates argued that the size of rebellions in England declined, comparing the Pilgrimage with the Oxfordshire and Essex rising. However, the strongest responses noted that some of the early dynastic rebellions were not that large or that Tyrone's rebellion was large. The frequency also provided a useful contrast with candidates able to comment on the number of English rebellions in Henry VII's reign compared with Elizabeth I, and then show how Ireland was a complete reversal. Location was perhaps the most challenging as many candidates showed a lack of geographical knowledge, believing that both Kett's rebellion and the Lady Jane Grey affair were focused in the North. Candidates who focused on causes produced partial responses, and once again it might be helpful for students to be made aware of the content of the Key Topics 1 and 2 in the specification.

Assessment for learning



Candidates do need a clear understanding of the location of the rebellions and to be aware where particular regions are located.

Question 4*

4* How far did the government's response to rebellions change in the period from 1485 to 1603?

[25]

There were a number of good responses to this question. These were most notable where candidates identified a range of responses, such as force and battle or negotiation, and compared these themes across the period. In discussing battles and the use of force, most candidates argued that all monarchs saw this as a risk, but it became less necessary as the period progressed. However, some candidates also argued that force was essential where there was a dynastic challenge, as under Henry VII or with both Mary in defeating Northumberland and Elizabeth with the Northern Earls. Candidates then went on to argue that force was not actually used in battle. The strongest responses were also able to identify the battles that did occur, supporting their argument with the precise detail required for the higher levels. In discussing negotiation most candidates were able to compare responses to the unrest in the Pilgrimage of Grace with the events of 1549. There was also discussion of pardons and retribution with many arguing that weaker monarchs such as Henry and Mary pursued a policy of leniency, and this was compared to Elizabeth who was brutal in her treatment of those involved in the Oxfordshire rising. There was some discussion of the use of propaganda, spies and the use of pre-emptive measures, all of which provided valid comparisons. The weakest responses simply pursued a chronological response, often just describing how the monarch dealt with a rebellion.

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