

A LEVEL

Examiners' report

HISTORY A

H505

For first teaching in 2015

Y112/01 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.

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Paper Y112/01 series overview

Y112 is one of thirteen units in Paper 1 for the revised A Level examination for GCE History. This unit tests an extended period of History of about fifty years through an Enquiries or source-based option and an essay. The paper is divided into two sections. In Section A candidates have to answer a compulsory source question based on four written primary sources. The question requires them to use all four sources to assess the validity of a view. In Section B candidates are required to answer one essay question from a choice of two.

To do well on Section A, candidates need to be able to both:

- consider the provenance of the sources, and
- apply contextual knowledge to the content of the sources

This allows them fully to answer the question set by reaching a judgement **about the sources** in relation to the issue in the question.

It is important that the judgement reached is based on an evaluation of the reliability of the evidence given, and that it is not merely the candidate's own judgement on the topic based purely on their own contextual knowledge.

In order to reach Level 6, a good strategy is to make a judgement at the end of the analysis of each source, with an overall judgement in the conclusion.

To do well on Section B, candidates need to address the issue in the question, using detailed supporting knowledge. In order to reach the higher levels, candidates will need to assess the issues they discuss and reach a supported judgement at least in the conclusion. To reach Level 6 candidates should also make an overall judgement as well as interim judgements when assessing each factor.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • considered the provenance of the source(s) and used relevant contextual knowledge • clearly linked the contextual knowledge to the source being discussed to show whether the view of the source was valid or not • reached an overall judgement as to the extent to which the sources supported the view in the question • discussed at least two relevant issues in depth • wrote supporting detail that was both accurate and relevant to the question set, not just the topic • reached a supported judgement about the issue in the question • made a series of interim judgements about the issues discussed in relation to the question. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • did not consider the provenance and use contextual knowledge to evaluate the sources • wrote an unbalanced response in their treatment of the sources, with very little consideration of one of the sources • reached a judgement based on their knowledge rather than the sources • showed a poor understanding of the major issues relevant to the essay • were unable to support their response with relevant material • did not focus on the precise wording of the question • made unsupported comments about issues which were assertions.

Section A overview

The Enquiry section in this unit examines the reasons whether economic and financial concerns were the focus of the debate about national efficiency in the period 1900-1918. The question required candidates to critically assess evidence and reach judgements. The critical evaluation of sources is the central theme in this section with all marks given against AO2.

Question 1

England and a New Century c.1900–1918

- 1 Using these four sources in their historical context, assess how far they support the view that economic and financial concerns were the focus of the debate about national efficiency in the period from 1900 to 1918. [30]

Most candidates were able to analyse the content of the four sources and reach a well-reasoned conclusion regarding those which supported the premise in the title and those that didn't. Candidates displayed a sound understanding of technique and so understood the need to use both context and provenance when evaluating the sources. Candidates should be reminded of the need to reach an appropriate judgement on the provenance of the sources as this is something that was omitted in many responses. Candidates who were less successful, tended to describe parts of the sources that agreed with their points without clear analysis and also tended to either ignore the provenance of the sources or fail to evaluate the sources in context.

Source A was used to contradict the premise in the question, with most candidates able to use the content to discuss the fact that health was a more significant concern, in particular, the use of alcohol. Contextually, candidates were able to call on a variety of support including the aftermath of the Boer War and the physical problems encountered in raising an army. Others pointed to the 1904 Licensing Laws and made profitable use of the context surrounding these. In terms of provenance candidates relied on stock analysis of a governmental report, with better responses aware of the expertise involved in the committee.

When analysing the content of Source B, candidates were able to use it to both support and challenge the views in the question. Candidates who used it to support the premise in the title, were able to argue that the country needed a stronger workforce to compete internationally with the country's biggest rivals. Others were able to point to the idea of social cohesion and that the country needed stronger citizens if it were to remain united. Contextually there was a variety of support offered, including the rise of Germany and the USA, the impact of New Liberalism, the flaws of the existing Poor Laws etc. Candidates who referred to any of these in their evaluation were rewarded. In terms of provenance the best responses recognised the distinction between the Majority and Minority Reports and were able to discuss the divisions profitably. Others noted the expertise of the Commission or commented on the disparaging tone of the report.

In terms of Source C, most candidates used its content to demonstrate how it supported the premise in the question by showing how poor wages were having a negative impact on industry. Some candidates questioned whether this was more a moral or financial question and were duly given marks too. Contextually, there were a number of avenues that were profitably explored with some candidates evaluating the source in relation to the industrial relations of 1910-12, with references to various strikes, including Tonypandy, as well as Liberal reforms. Others discussed the findings of Booth and Rowntree and were able to evaluate accordingly. Provenance was usually good although many candidates believed that Fabians were a right-wing organisation. Some candidates focused on Ensor being dependable as he was a respected writer, while the best responses considered his Fabian background as having more sympathy with the views he was advocating.

The provenance of Source D was generally well-known with candidates able to discuss Rowntree's expertise and background. A few candidates expanded on this with good knowledge of the welfare schemes available at his factory in York, although this wasn't widely known. The key points of the question were usually analysed correctly and most candidates were able to discuss the specific context of WW1 and Rowntree's purpose in raising these issues.

Exemplar 1

Overall these sources only partly agree that economic and financial concerns were the focus of the National Efficiency debate. Source D presents an economic view, advocating for national efficiency on the grounds of creating a motivated workforce and Source B also argues that national efficiency will improve ~~international~~ international trade. However Source B also cites imperial ambitions as a reason for national efficiency. Source A aims to solve social degeneration and "wills" in society through national efficiency, with no mention of economic reasons, while Source C also mentions physical, moral and social reasons alongside economic reasons.

Source C ^{does not support} ~~the~~ the view in the question. The findings of Sebastian Roentgen, which are cited here as cause for concern as they showed over 50,000 ~~incidents~~ incidents in York listed in object poverty, were conducted due to humanitarian reasons as Roentgen was a Quaker. In addition the Fabian Society, founded in the 1880s on the new wave of middle class socialism, advocated for universal basic income as a responsibility of an ethical government rather ~~than~~ than an economically viable policy. Because of this Source C is a typical view for a Fabian. The idea of underpaying industrialists being "parasitic" is also a socialist idea, rooted in ideas such as the equal distribution of the profits of labour. ~~While~~ While this source supports economic change, Ennos supports the legal minimum wage as a means to an end - higher rates of physical health and better moral standards in society.

~~Because~~ Because of this Source C only slightly supports the view in the question. Source C is slightly limited in convincence as ~~the~~ national efficiency was a majority conservative agreement, while Fabians were more left wing. Because of this Source C may not have reflected the average pro-national efficiency view of the time, but rather the average Fabian view. ~~As a result~~ As a result Source C slightly supports the view in the question as it may not reflect the more popular national efficiency view held by the

Conservative majority.

Source B also partly agrees with the ~~view~~ ^{Finance} view that ~~the~~ and economies were the main focus of national efficiency debates, ~~stating~~ stating that national efficiency would support international trade. This ~~view~~ desire for more open trade is supported by the economic state of Britain compared to other rising powers - by 1900 Britain only was responsible for 14% of international trade compared to significantly higher figures from USA and Germany. By 1918, ~~some~~ ^{some} economically immature powers such as Russia and Japan had reduced dependency on Britain for trade, instead building their own economies. Source B is additionally convincing as it comes from a report from the Royal Commission during 1909, a time at which Liberals and Conservatives, who were especially likely to support national efficiency, dominated government. While Source B ~~also~~ repeats the same arguments from Source C about societal degeneration, the improvement of society through national efficiency here is presented as a way to further Britain's economic interest. Source B is also extremely convincing as it mentions imperial ambitions, which were a huge factor in the national efficiency debates. ~~This~~ ^{and xenophobic} source reflects Social Darwinist, ~~the~~ imperial ^{and xenophobic} views of Conservatives at the time, making it highly convincing in supporting the view that economic and financial concerns drove the national efficiency debates. Overall Source B somewhat agrees with this view - it cites imperial ~~the~~ motivations alongside economic and financial ones. However the argument for imperial causes is made far more convincingly by the source's proenance as well as the belief in lower, inferior classes and "subject races". One of the other causes for National Efficiency was the drive to improve the military - 3/5 of men who signed up to fight in the Boer War were turned away due to poor health. While this source supports the view more convincingly than Source C, in the end it provides more support for national efficiency as a

measures to advance British supremacy rather than a solely financial and economic one. Because of this Source B only ~~slightly~~ somewhat supports the view in the question.

Source A entirely doesn't support the view in the question. Source A is also a source from a Conservative Government (Balfour's) from 1902-1906, which would make the Committee an authority on the National Efficiency debate. However A makes no mention of economics and finance as an argument for national efficiency, instead citing public health and education as the main aims. In Source A national efficiency is presented, similarly to its Source C, as a solution for "physical evils" such as drink. This argument is supported by societies of the era such as the Temperance Society, which was also supported by suffragists such as Millicent Fawcett and religious non-conformists such as Quakers. ~~While moral and physical health~~ In addition ~~the~~ acts such as Balfour's licensing act were unpopular for their reimbursement of an "immoral" industry - for example over 5000 pubs were compensated for license losses in Birmingham alone. While anti-alcoholism and pro-education sentiments were not typically Conservative, ~~the~~ moralist outrage was still common and this supports Source A, which states moral and physical health measures for national efficiency. Measures introduced from 1900-1909 such as the first maternity clinic in 1907 also support the ~~the~~ physical health and moral arguments for national efficiency. While the views on education may have been to the end of producing a more able rural workforce, this is not mentioned in Source A. Overall, Source A doesn't support the view in the question. ~~The~~ The view is ~~clearly~~ ~~liberal~~ ~~conservative~~ ~~from~~ ~~the~~ ~~time~~ ~~period~~ ~~and~~ ~~audience~~ - these commendable measures would have ~~been~~ been responsible for abolishing the school age and banning children from pubs and begging - making the source highly convincing as a view on national efficiency, ^{and} it provides no financial or economic

plays rather than the results of a government investigation. Overall these sources only partly support the argument that the biggest factors in the national efficiency debate were economic and financial reasons. While Sources B, ~~and C~~ do mention economic and financial factors, Source C is ~~made~~ made less convincing by its ~~addition~~ non-conservative origin ~~and~~ citation. In addition the aim of the Fabians in Source C was to promote social improvement through economic means, rather than economics as the end goal. Source B's economic arguments, ~~while~~ while convincing, are accompanied by additional imperialist ideas which suggest economics + finance were not the main focus, but rather imperialism. Source D suggests social improvement as a way in which to ensure national efficiency in economics, but has slightly less credibility as ~~a~~ a piece of open advice rather than a ~~formal~~ formal report, making it less convincing in its support of the view. ~~Source~~ Source A provides no support for the view in the question, and is highly convincing in its provisions, instead suggesting that the elimination of "social evils" is the focus of national efficiency. The most convincing sources, A and C, due to their provenance, suggest that the main focus of National Efficiency, was producing a more healthy, educated population for an imperial power, through the removal of social evils (like alcohol and the underclass poor (as also described in the Majority Report)). Because of this, cumulatively these sources only partly support the view that economics and finance were the main focus of the national efficiency debate 1900-1914. ~~Source~~

Exemplar 1 demonstrates a response that has a judgement in the conclusion and reached the top of Level 5.

Misconception



A significant number of candidates felt that Ensor, a Fabian, was writing from a right-wing perspective and was determined to protect the interests of business owners.

Assessment for learning



To achieve the higher levels, candidates must evaluate the four sources using context and provenance and reach a judgement on the reliability of the sources. Exemplar 1 shows a judgement on the sources that reached Level 5 with the candidate evaluating the provenance here.

Section B overview

Two essays are set, each from a different Key Topic. The candidates were asked to examine whether Conservative domestic policies were the most important reason for their defeat in 1929 or if financial issues were the main difficulty facing Labour governments in the period 1945-51. The questions set required candidates to analyse causes and consequences of major historical issues.

Question 2*

Britain c.1918–1951

- 2* 'Conservative domestic policies in the period from 1924 to 1929 were the most important reason for the Conservative's election defeat in 1929.' How far do you agree? [20]

Question 2 was the least popular of the two essays and responses were variable in quality. Candidates who gave the best responses, considered a range of factors including their handling of the General Strike and the negative impacts of the Trades Disputes Act, the return to the Gold Standard and the extension of the franchise to women over twenty-one. The minority of candidates were able to point to the successes of Chamberlain or the impact of the national grid and the BBC. In countering these arguments there were few who were able to discuss the lacklustre election campaign of 'Safety-First', or the lack of character in the cabinet. Many candidates were able to discuss how the Liberal Party split the opposition vote and could discuss the popularity of the Labour Party.

Question 3*

- 3* 'Financial problems were more serious than other difficulties faced by the Labour governments in the period from 1945 to 1951.' How far do you agree? [20]

Question 3 was the more popular essay question with some good responses elicited. Strong responses were able to focus on the serious nature of the financial problems facing Attlee's government and compare these to other issues. In terms of financial issues, most candidates were able to discuss war debts, the 'dollar gap', the policy of austerity and the impact of Marshall Aid. In contrast there were good references to relations with trade unions, problems in the NHS, demobilisation and issues within the empire, particularly in India. Where candidates focused on the nature of problems, they were largely successful. Less successful responses drifted from the question to discuss why Labour lost the election of 1951.

Exemplar 2

Ultimately, while Labour under Ather did suffer ~~many~~ many difficulties in their pursuit of a more socialised and equal Britain, financial reasons were the most serious. Indeed, while other factors like internal conflict within the Labour Party, and its struggle to enact its social and economic agenda, did contribute, the central struggle, and the reason the government ~~was~~ fell, is due to financial problems.

Firstly, financial problems plagued Labour ~~between~~ between 1945-51 and these proved the most challenging for Labour to manage, as it never could ultimately solve these issues. Labour had inherited a post-war British economy severely in debt, with a national debt of 3000 million in 1945, and a balance of payments ~~deficit~~ deficit of 850 million a year. Thus, from the start, Labour was forced to manage economic problems rather than honour its agenda. The most crucial example of this being in 1948, when the ~~the~~ the capital flight of the British ~~was~~ treasury, and the unexpectedly high costs for the NHS led to

the necessary ending of free prescriptions. This turned
 the calling of an early election in 1951 which
 pushed Labour into opposition and so undoubtedly
 without a doubt financial difficulty by definition was
 the most severe issue for Labour. This occurred
 due to the resignation of Aneurin Bevan, Health Secretary,
 and greater internal conflict in Labour, due to this being
 an abandonment of the universalised vision of the NHS,
 which made Labour's small majority no longer ~~workable~~
 workable, having only 232 of 321 seats after the
 1950 election. Beyond this, financial issues significantly
 hampered Labour's government, for the significant debt and
 interest payments forcing Labour to continue strict
 rationing beyond the end of WW2. Indeed,
 the "dollar gap", the difference between the
 value of the sterling and the dollar, forced Labour
 to strictly control trade, and eventually to devalue
 the pound, a measure which Labour has desperate
 to avoid, in 1949. The very fact that Labour
 was forced to strictly control (people's) lives, going
 against the moderate stance they wished, through wage
 freezes and ~~strong~~ harsh deflationary budgets ~~made~~ are
 clear evidence that Labour struggled immensely due to
 financial problems. Thus, this ~~was~~ ^{was} the most important
 problem faced by Labour in this period, as it
 forced a compromise on their vision of universal welfare,
 and forced them to impose harsh economic controls, due to
 the unavoidable flows of the ~~the~~ ^{the} British significant
 debt, ~~as~~ as well as the dollar gap.

However, while financial ~~issues~~ problems remained the most important throughout the period, other issues did play a role. For example, the enactment of the bold vision of a welfare state, and nationalisation were an aim difficult, but crucially were measures ^{Labour} successfully addressed, and thus cannot be considered to be more serious than its financial problems. As an example, the NHS, created in 1949, certainly was a compromise on the initial vision put forth by Aneurin Bevan, but crucially ~~it~~ was enacted with much of its initial aim intact. The conflict with the BMA, an association of doctors, over fees of decreased pay and other issues did present a serious problem for Labour and Bevan. ~~The~~ White papers for a brief moment this may have been viewed as a threat to the ~~the~~ creation of the NHS, the power and authority of central government did result in a favourable compromise. Private ~~care~~ healthcare remained as an alternative, and GPs remained private contractors, but the overall vision of the NHS as a centralised universal service was preserved. In the programme of nationalisation Labour pursued, also, largely little resistance was faced with the only real conflict between government and private corporations emerging in the 1949 nationalisation of the steel and iron industries. This dispute was over the ~~value~~ ^{just} the industry was profitable, and thus its owners were unwilling to sell to the government, so despite much outcry from

Consequently, his ~~own~~ ambition also was successfully enacted, after a year delay by the House of Lords. Thus, while issues over the government or Labour's agenda did exist, the fact that all these potential issues were conjured shows that this was not the most serious issue faced by Labour.

Finally, political coherence within the Labour Party itself could be seen as contributing to difficulties for Attlee's ~~own~~ ministry. However, due to the sizable majority attained by the ~~government~~ government in 1945 this rarely posed any significant issues. Perhaps the sole exception to this could be over the introduction of ~~medical~~ ^{the} ~~to~~ fund medical prescriptions, which forced the ~~other~~ ~~side~~ ~~the~~ ~~the~~ ~~side~~ of Labour's vast total of 315 members, forcing the calling of an early election in 1951 which Labour lost. Beyond this, the overly moderate agenda ~~was~~ ^{was} ~~was~~ ^{was} well supported by the party, even if internal divisions did exist over issues like the government's pro-American policy. Certainly, the alignment with the capitalist USA over the Communist USSR was seen by the left of Labour to be disgraceful, but this did not prevent the emergence of this agenda ~~and~~ ^{and}. In fact, Labour played a crucial role in the formation of NATO, a key western alliance in the Cold War, emphasising the fact that ~~the~~ ~~the~~ ~~left~~ ~~wing~~ ~~division~~ was not a fix.

To conclude, financial problems were fundamentally the most significant problem faced by Labour in 1945-51 as it was an issue that

	The government government never never could truly
	escape throughout its 6 year years in power.
	Indeed, it cannot be forgotten that financial
	problems were what ultimately caused the fall of
	Attlee's Ministry, and so without the least can
	be seen as that serious. Other issues did occasionally
	pose problems, like the passage of Labour's agenda,
	but these were usually the navigated with
	success unlike Labour's financial problems.
	A considerable issue for the government for
	much of its tenure.

Exemplar 2 answers Question 3 and illustrates a Level 5 response with three factors well-argued and some judgement applied.

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