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GCSE (9–1)

Examiners' report

HISTORY A (EXPLAINING THE MODERN WORLD)

J410

For first teaching in 2016

J410/08 Summer 2023 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 responses are 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 8 series overview

This paper examines the thematic study of Migration to Britain, c.1000 to c.2010. It requires candidates to display their understanding of change and continuity across a sweep of British history, including a significant event. Knowledge is assessed through four questions asking for recall, causation, significance and analysis of an issue over two eras specified by the syllabus.

The examination focuses on Assessment Objectives 1 and 2; demonstrating knowledge and understanding as well as explaining and analysing historical events.

In order to perform well on the British thematic study, candidates needed to apply their knowledge and understanding to identify and explain the impact of migration on Britain. This includes an extended essay that requires the use of examples from across two of the three periods of study. Successful candidates responded well to the challenges the paper presented and had a secure grasp of the chronology. Candidates' learning is examined through questions asking for recall, study of impact, significance, and analysis of an issue over two periods.

Candidates' responses spanned a wide range of ability, they demonstrated an understanding of the 'broad sweep' of this specification. Marks were given across the entire mark range for all four questions.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
• showed a clear understanding of the command words and of the demands of the different question types • selected and used specific information about the key areas covered in the questions • selected their examples to match the demands of the questions carefully • managed their time effectively to make sure their responses covered each question with an appropriate level of depth.	• used the questions as prompts rather than focusing on the specific demands of the question • did not draw their examples from the period stated in the question • offered material that was of dubious relevance to the questions set.

Question 1

1   Describe **two** examples of the role migrants played in political movements in Britain between 1750 and 1900.   [4]

There were two broad approaches to this question; either to give example(s) of general migrant groups involved in specific events or organisations such as the Cutter Riots, The Great Yiddish Parade or Jewish Tailors' Strike, the Pan African or Sons of Africa movement; or to give examples of specific individuals being involved in more general groups such as Mary Prince or Olaudah Equiano being involved in slavery abolition movements. The most frequent example was Feargus O'Connor being a Chartist leader.

The rubric of this question was followed well. Candidates gave, or attempted to give, two examples, with further detail, of a role migrants played in political movements in Britain.

Question 2

2   Explain why there was migration to England between c.1000 and 1600.   [8]

Many candidates were able to give examples of reasons for migration to England during this period. Candidates were usually able to cite invasion, invitation, religious or economic causation and link it to a group, meaning Level 2 was possible for most.

More successful responses ensured their explanations were focused on why these reasons meant the groups migrated to England within the specific time period. For example, candidates who could explain that religious persecution meant Walloons and Huguenots migrated to England because it was a Protestant country were meeting the demands of the question by demonstrating how their knowledge was relevant. Another example would be explaining the Jewish migration during William I's reign, linking their explanation of the Christian banning of usury to William's need for money and so explaining why they migrated, specifically to England.

Assessment for learning

Focus on causation and the specific demand of the question. Ask candidates to think in terms of the causational stem, the migrant group to exemplify it and then how that relates to why the group selected England/Britain, why, out of all the places they could have chosen, did they choose to cross a sea?

Exemplar 1

A second reason why there was migration to Britain between 1000 and 1600 was due to the Battle of Hastings. In 1066, William I won the battle and took power over England. This caused some French to migrate so that they could maintain William's power and fight off rebellions. William I also invited over friends and family to replace saxon thanes such as Bishop Odo of Bayeaux. Therefore, a second reason why there was migration to Britain between 1000 and 1600 was due to the Battle of Hastings.

This response demonstrates a successful example of an answer to this question.

Question 3

3   How significant was migration in changing Britain's national identity between 1900 and 2010?

[14]

Question 3 requires candidates to structure a response around the concept of significance. There were many responses showing sound understanding of national identity. Many successful responses had explanations that were linked to cultural phenomenon such as food, using examples like curry and/or fish and chips, or to the importance of migrant groups to institutions like the NHS and how the institution was entwined with national identity. Other ways candidates were successful was through the use of the issue of racism, either showing how the British national identity had become synonymous with tolerance and acceptance or through how it had not changed; how many people wanted being British to be exclusively for white people. Both methods were equally acceptable and access to the higher levels of the mark scheme was reliant on providing and explaining examples with relevance to the question, not on how the question was approached.

Many candidates successfully explained groups that had no impact on national identity, for instance using the example of the Kindertransport where the relatively small number of children that had arrived had been absorbed into British families thereby making no changes.

Some candidates tried to use cultural links such as music or the Notting Hill Carnival but did not make the link to how this had an impact on national identity. This is where many candidates could have improved their responses, by focusing on the impact, or not, on national identity, rather than more general comments about how life in Britain changed during the 20th century.

Exemplar 2

Migration between 1900 and 2010 has also played a major part in changing Britain's national identity through politics. Caribbean migrant arriving after the 1948 British Nationality Act ~~a helped~~ fought for racial equality. For example the Bristol Bus Boycotts and their influence on the 1960s Race Relations Act being passed. Although at the time some of these legislations were not very transformative (as many still had racist views regardless of the law), overtime these ~~legi~~ movements set the foundations for the racial equality Britain has today. Today, equality, diversity and tolerance of others are key British values and form the parts of the British national identity, so Caribbean migrants had an extremely significant and long lasting impact on British national identity.

The candidate names a migrant group that affected the change, what the change was, gives two relevant examples of how the change was enacted, meaning it is awarded Level 3. Then the response is related to the concept of both national identity and its long term significance. In doing so the response moves to Level 4.

Question 4*

4*   'Between 1500 and 2010 governments in Britain made it difficult for migrants to come to Britain.'

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. Three explained examples covering both sides of the argument and both time periods gives access to the higher marks in Level 4.

Most candidates showed sound understanding of the demands of the question in terms of arguing both for and against the statement as well as ensuring that examples were taken from different time periods.

Successful candidates focused on how difficult, or not, governments made it for migrants to gain access to the shores of Britain. Many used the example of how access to Britain for Protestants was easier because of the Foreign Protestants Naturalisation Act. Candidates explained its terms and how it allowed easy migration for groups such as the Huguenots and/or Palatines. In doing so they showed understanding of what the government did (in the Act) and how it made the action of coming to Britain easy. The 1905 Aliens Act was also used a great deal and successful candidates showed understanding about how the proofs demanded by the Act made it more difficult to step foot on British soil.

Some candidates recognised that their examples were about life being difficult to be a migrant on British soil but made sure their explanation answered the question. For example, many used the example of the banning and expulsion of gypsies but ensured their explanation covered how this would deter gypsies from trying to enter Britain, thereby satisfying the demands of the question.

A few candidates offered clinching arguments, showing more than a summary, usually by talking about groups that had their way to Britian eased through offering a benefit to the government, or were trying to come at a time of economic prosperity or talked about the growing role of government through the time periods.

There was little evidence of planning and this would help many candidates focus their examples. Only four examples are needed to reach Level 5 and successful candidates showed awareness of this.

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