

GCSE



# Chief Examiner's Report History

Summer Series 2019





## Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of this specification for the Summer 2019 series.

CCEA hopes that the Chief Examiner's and/or Principal Moderator's report(s) will be viewed as a helpful and constructive medium to further support teachers and the learning process.

This booklet forms part of the suite of support materials for the specification. Further materials are available from the specification's section on our website at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk).



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# GCSE HISTORY

## Chief Examiner's Report

### Subject Overview

7999 candidates took this examination, the first year that the entire cohort sat the new GCSE History specification. These examinations provided additional challenges as they encompassed a candidature previously entered for Higher and Foundation tiers. Thus, the unified entry characteristics produced a wide spread of responses from the outstanding to candidates who clearly struggled to engage with the demands of the papers. Whilst the entry characteristics may have changed, the candidature reflects an increase in uptake for the new unified specification at GCSE History. There was continuity in the overall outcomes despite the wider ability range undertaking the examinations. This report reflects feedback from a team of nearly 70 Assistant Examiners. This commentary has distilled their experiences of marking GHR 11 and GHR 21 and may provide guidance for candidates and their teachers in preparation for future series of these papers.

### Assessment Unit 1      Modern World Studies in Depth and Local Study

In Section A, 88% of candidates chose Option 1: Life in Nazi Germany, 1933-1945 and 12% chose Option 2: Life in the United States of America, 1920-1933. In Section B 25% of candidates chose Option 1: Changing Relations: Northern Ireland and its Neighbours, 1920-1949 and 75% of candidates chose Option 2: Changing Relations: Northern Ireland and its Neighbours, 1965-1998. In this second series, the questions in Unit 1 allowed candidates of a wide ability range comprising Years 11 and 12, the opportunity to address a range of assessment objectives across two options. Many students excelled, displaying most impressive knowledge and source skills. The full range of marks from 0 to 80 was awarded in this paper.

#### Section A

#### Option 1: Life in Nazi Germany, 1933-1945

- Q1** This recall question on the experiences of workers in Nazi Germany asked candidates to match 4 words to the correct descriptors. 25% of candidates confused DAF and RAD.
- Q2** This question focused on the experience of Jews in Germany between 1933 and 1939. It was well answered with most candidates able to identify and describe the experiences of Jews in Nazi Germany. Examiners did comment on digressive responses with detail on the ghettos, wearing the Star of David and extermination camps.
- Q3** Both options on actions taken by the Nazis to consolidate power between 1933 and 1934 proved to be popular. In both, the focus was on how the law/event helped consolidate Nazi power. Some candidates over focused on background to and the passing of the Enabling Act and the events of the Night of the Long Knives, rather than how the law/event was used to increase Nazi control.
- Q4** This question on the police state was quite well answered by most candidates. Less well-prepared candidates showed confusion in nomenclature and responsibilities of differing groups constituting the police state. The best answers included detail on fear

and intimidation tactics, the legal system and concentration camps. Some candidates only focused on the role of the SA/SS between 1933 and 1934 and on propaganda and censorship rather than an appraisal of how the police state strengthened Nazi control.

- Q5** The topic of opposition and resistance in Germany between 1933 and 1939 proved challenging. In this high tariff question, it is important that candidates are clear about the demands of the question in order to avoid digression and ensure there is meaningful engagement with the proposition and a verdict on the extent of agreement/disagreement at the end. Many candidates underachieved by digression about events before 1939 and outside Germany for example, the extent and nature of Nazi political control, Jewish resistance in the concentration camps and the Warsaw Ghetto. The best answers included detail and evaluation on the actions of youth, the churches and army that debated the success/failure aspect raised in the proposition with accurate context. The overall standard of responses for this question was below expectations.

### **Option 2: Life in the United States of America, 1920-1933**

- Q6** This was very well answered with 90% of candidates correctly matching the four words on the experiences of Native Americans in the 1920s.
- Q7** This caused some problems as some candidates focused on reasons for hostility towards immigrants rather than a developed description of the experiences of immigrants in the 1920s that illustrated hostility. Some answers cited employment and housing problems but lacked precise context. The best responses identified specific ways with supporting detail, such as the Red Scare and deportations and the legal system and the Sacco and Vanzetti Case.
- Q8** Both industry and agriculture were popular choices with some excellent detail in Level 3 answers. However, many candidates struggled to deploy precise context to illustrate the experiences of industry/lives of workers and agriculture/lives of farmers. There was over focus on the 1920s and the Dust Bowl in agriculture/lives of farmers was omitted in many responses.
- Q9** Most candidates maintained a good focus on reasons in explaining why there was an economic boom in the USA in the 1920s. There was a tendency by some candidates to over focus on share buying and the Stock Exchange. A minority included descriptions of the rise of the cinema and Jazz music with limited focus on their relevance as a cause of the economic boom.
- Q10** Most candidates achieved an encouraging standard with impressive contextual detail deployed to debate both sides of the proposition on the experiences of women in the USA in the 1920s. Less well-prepared candidates wrote about the problems women faced in the USA before 1920 or wrote only about the experiences of the Flappers. The result was a lack of balance and limited engagement with the debate raised in the question.

### **Section B**

#### **Option 1: Changing Relations: Northern Ireland and its Neighbours, 1920-1949**

- Q1** Most candidates were able to extract accurate detail from Source A and include contextual development. Most candidates scored full marks.

- Q2** Candidates found little difficulty in providing valid reasons for unionist opposition to the 1937 Constitution and most were able to include accurate context. References to the Catholic Church and Irish language were the most popular reasons.

### Question 3 and 4

Assessing source utility and reliability caused problems for some candidates attempting both options in Section B. It was clear that teachers have provided acronyms to assist students prepare for source evaluation questions as these were often written on the examination paper as aides-memoires. However, examiners have commented that in many responses there was a disconnect between theory and practice. The overlap in content and approach noted by many examiners indicate that some candidates struggle to engage with the demands of these questions in both options of Section B.

- Q3** It was clear that while most candidates comprehended the content of Source C, there was limited use of source content in answers on utility. Very few alluded to the reference to Éire giving 'no military help'. There was reference to authorship, date and mode but limited explicit comment on how these helped source utility. The imbalance between neutrality and benevolent neutrality in the source was noted by few candidates in assessing its usefulness. Some candidates hijacked the question to write a mini precis on benevolent neutrality with little awareness of the question.
- Q4** Assessing reliability posed problems. There was a tendency to replicate the detail used in utility in the answer on reliability. Most candidates commented in general terms on authorship, date and benevolent neutrality. However, to achieve Level 3 clear awareness of the elements determining reliability need to be discussed. Candidates too often were inconsistent: often beginning by asserting the source was reliable and in the next sentence stating that it was unreliable. Few candidates highlighted the limitations of the source by reference to content, motive and omissions and context was not used enough to support analysis.
- Q5** (a) This was well answered. Most candidates identified a valid effect of the Economic War.
- (b) Less than 40% of candidates correctly identified Neville Chamberlain. Winston Churchill was the most popular choice.
- (c) The consequences of the introduction of the Welfare State caused problems with less than half the candidature correctly identifying a valid effect. Many candidates wrongly cited attitudes towards the Welfare State.
- (d) This was generally well-answered. However, some candidates strayed beyond the remit of the question and included details of Northern Ireland's contribution to the war effort. Complacency and declaration of loyalty were the most popular accurate responses.
- Q6** (a) Well-prepared candidates scored very well in this question. However, the specific detail on De Valera's actions in dismantling the Anglo-Irish Treaty by 1936 proved challenging with overly brief responses with omissions or digression to the effects of the Economic War and terms of the 1937 Constitution.
- (b) There were many excellent essays on the contribution of agriculture and industry to the war effort. However, less well-informed answers lacked accuracy and precision. The inclusion of accurate context on both sectors was a clear differentiator in this answer.
- (c) The effects of the Declaration of the Republic and the Ireland Act was the least popular choice and least well-answered.

## Option 2: Changing relations: Northern Ireland and its Neighbours, 1965-1998

- Q7** Most candidates were able to extract a valid reason from the source, but many struggled to provide accurate context on nationalist hopes for the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985. Reference to the civil rights movement and context on the grievances of nationalists in the 1960s could not be credited.
- Q8** Most candidates scored well with accurate context provided on unionist fears. Precise reference to source content is recommended and a minority of candidates' choice of quotation did not provide a reason: 'we are prepared to lay down our lives for Ulster in response' cannot be credited as a valid reason.

### Question 9 and 10

Assessing source utility and reliability caused problems for some students attempting both options in Section B. It was clear that teachers have provided acronyms to assist students prepare for source evaluation questions as these were often written on the examination paper as aides-memoires. However, examiners have commented that in many responses there is a disconnect between theory and practice. The overlap in content and approach noted by many examiners indicate that some candidates struggle to engage with the demands of these questions in both options of section B.

- Q9** Most candidates referred to authorship and date in assessing utility. However, as in Option 1, there was insufficient use of source content to illustrate utility. Many candidates were able to highlight the need for a wider range of views of O'Neill as a limitation, though very limited context was used to illustrate Lynch's comments. A minority of candidates hijacked the question and wrote a short account of O'Neill's reforms as Prime Minister with only passing reference to the source.
- Q10** Many candidates struggled to assess reliability in a convincing and consistent way. A minority were able to refer to tone and source content to reflect bias. Few candidates were able to use their own knowledge to identify groups e.g., nationalists and unionists in Northern Ireland whose criticism was instrumental in O'Neill's decision to resign. Indeed, there seemed to be a disconnect between O'Neill's resignation and the source content. Only a minority of candidates were able to identify this as an important factor in determining the reliability of the source.
- Q11 (a)** Only one-third of candidates correctly identified Brighton as the town where the IRA tried to kill Mrs Thatcher.
- (b)** The reason why NICRA emerged was very well answered. Over 90% of candidates were able to identify a valid reason.
- (c)** A valid term of the Downing Street Declaration of 1993 was correctly identified by only 40% of candidates. Many confused its terms with the Downing Street Declaration of 1970 and the Anglo-Irish Agreement.
- (d)** Candidates appear better informed about the Good Friday Agreement. However, some candidates lost marks by providing a term rather than a response to the Good Friday Agreement.
- Q12 (a)** Many candidates could identify paramilitary groups but only the best-informed were able to provide contextual detail on events that led to the emergence of paramilitaries by 1972. Coverage of the IRA split was often confused and only the best responses included key factors such as the arrival of the British Army, the Falls Road Curfew and Bloody Sunday as contributing to the emergence of PIRA. The best responses had accuracy and balance with awareness of republican and loyalist paramilitaries.

- (b)** The question on the differing responses to the introduction of the power-sharing executive was not well answered. Most answers were generalised and emotion-based with over focus on the role of the Republic of Ireland and confusion with the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Some good detail was included by candidates on the UWC Strike but the political support and opposition to power sharing lacked precision and there were significant lapses and omissions.
- (c)** The reasons for the hunger strikes was the most popular question and was generally well-answered. Most candidates displayed clear awareness of the significance of Special Category Status and the failure of previous protests as important reasons. However, coverage of the hunger strikes of 1980 and 1981 was descriptive and focused on effects and significance rather than on why the hunger strike was used as a tactic, why the first hunger strike failed and why the second was organised in a different way. The full range of marks was awarded in this question.

## Assessment Unit 2      Outline Study

This was the first sitting of the new specification for Unit 2 with a total of 6,766 candidates sitting this unit. The examining team observed a wide and varied range of responses to this paper. It was generally felt that the paper enabled candidates of differing abilities to achieve their potential. There was evidence that centres had availed of the support offered by CCEA in preparing for this unit and centres should be encouraged to access and use 'GCSE History Steps to Success guidance for students' and 'Student Guidance for answering the Big Questions on Paper 2' when preparing candidates for the examination.

The paper consists of two sections accounting for 40% of the total mark in GCSE History. Section A targets all four Assessment Objectives. Candidates are required to use four sources related to International Relations to allow them to answer five source-based questions with an incline of difficulty. The mark allocation gives greater weight to Section A-34 marks are available to candidates here. This assisted the majority of candidates who performed better in this section. Section B targets both AO1 and AO2 with the focus on one structured question and extended writing. In the extended writing section candidates are required to address one topic, from a choice of two, with three guidelines to assist them in structuring the response. 26 marks are available in this section.

The examining team were encouraged with the overall standard of the first sitting of this paper, reporting that the new unified entry characteristic produced a wide range of responses from the outstanding to candidates who clearly struggled to engage with the demands of this paper. Most candidates coped competently with the demands of Question 1 and Question 2 (a) and (b). Questions 3 and 4 in Section A were effective differentiators for candidates and virtually all candidates attempted answers and scored marks in their responses. In Section B, the addition of a structured short response in Question 5 assisted candidates whilst the extended writing responses in Question 6 attracted a wide variety of responses. Assistant examiners were able to award the full range of marks, yet despite this a number of candidates struggled with the extended writing required in Section B. The guidance offered by the structured nature of the questions is intended to guide candidates through the topic. Many did respond positively to this. Overall, the examining team agreed that this paper gave all candidates good opportunities to respond according to their abilities.

## Section A

Questions in Section A were based on four sources which focused on the different interpretations of the reasons for the development of tension between the USSR and the USA between 1945 and 1948.

- Q1** Requires candidates to extract and analyse information from one source. The majority of candidates were able to extract precise information from Source A to explain Churchill's views of the actions of the USSR in Central and Eastern Europe at the end of World War Two. Candidates are reminded that this question should be answered in a short paragraph which uses the information in the source provided to directly answer the question. No outside knowledge is required.
- Q2** Assistant examiners noted that this new revised format for Question 2 was more accessible for candidates and a broad range of candidates had been well prepared for these responses. In Question 2(a) centres and candidates should be reminded that the focus here is on the content of the two sources in explaining how the sources differ. A minority of candidates focused on authorship in Question 2(a) and this was not the focus in this response. Candidates should also be reminded that they should identify a valid difference between Source B and Source C and support this with evidence from the source. They should follow this structure twice on the examination paper. Some candidates only focused on one example of difference and this limited the marks awarded in this question. Valid points of omission; something which is mentioned in one source and not mentioned in the other was also credited as a point of difference.

The focus of Question 2(b) is authorship. The examining team were very encouraged with responses to this question and the vast majority of candidates scored highly here. However, some candidates mixed up their responses to Question 2(a) and Question 2(b). Examination practice in this area will help to reduce this. Candidates should be encouraged to identify the different authors in explaining why the views are different and then develop this with supporting evidence.

Candidates and teachers are reminded that Questions 1, 2(a) and 2(b) are based wholly on the sources and must be answered with clear reference to source content in order to access the marks available. No outside knowledge is required.

- Q3** Produced a wide range of responses in this first sitting of GHR21. Candidates are asked about the view in a source and how convinced they are by this view. Whilst it was evident that many centres and candidates had taken cognisance of the guidance and support provided in preparing for this question, there was considerable evidence that candidates were still responding to this as a utility and reliability question. That is not the focus in this question. Centres should be encouraged to assist their candidates in preparing for the examination by using the guidance on the CCEA website to assist here. Many candidates dealt well with the convincing aspect of the content and the senior examining team would encourage candidates to write separate paragraphs which help to scaffold candidates' writing in relation to discuss the convincing aspects of the source and then challenging the convincing aspects of the view; in this case Stalin's actions in Eastern Europe after 1945. As per the guidance candidates can agree, partially agree or disagree with the view given. Candidates should also be reminded here to include their contextual knowledge which should relate to the view in the question. Whilst there was some excellent evidence of detail including the buffer zone, vote rigging and intimidating political opponents, the examining team noted that some detail included by candidates digressed outside the Stalinist era or Eastern Europe.

**Q4** Was the most challenging question in Section A, drawing responses which demonstrated a wide range of abilities and was the most effective differentiator in Unit 2. Some candidates were able to discuss the actions of Stalin in Eastern Europe after 1945 as outlined in the sources but failed to identify how the sources differed in their views or the reasons for the differences. Assistant examiners observed that many candidates were unable to access Level 4 marks as they did not address the full requirements of the task. The most common omission was a failure to explain the reasons for the interpretations in each of the sources; this requires an analysis of authorship. Comprehensive guidance has been provided in CCEA support materials on what is required to access Level 4 marks. The advice to candidates and teachers from the examining team is that in order to access top level marks in this question, responses require explanation of the different views in the three sources and some explanation of the reasons why the authors have those views. Candidates must make specific and direct use of each of the sources in their responses and support this with valid contextual knowledge. A judgement must be reached. Whilst the examining team saw considerable evidence of acronyms such as ICEVOK on candidate's examination papers it was not always evident that candidates knew how to apply these techniques in practice. One final observation is that candidates are reminded that comment on reliability and utility is unnecessary. The requirement to reach a judgement, either agreeing or disagreeing with the statement in the question, using some contextual knowledge in the process, is handled well by the majority.

Candidates are advised to study the revised exemplar materials provided by CCEA in order to establish a clear understanding of the approach required to access the full range of marks for this question.

## Section B

The extended writing required in Section B continues to be a most effective differentiator and the addition of a structured response in Question 5 allowed candidates an opportunity to write on one of the new areas of the specification in the examination. Question 6(a) was the most popular choice; well-prepared candidates made effective use of the structure provided by the three guidelines to organise their answers. However, there was sometimes a lack of the depth and detail required. Very general answers, sometimes leaving out some of the guidelines, were observed. A small number of candidates attempted both questions Question 6(a) and 6(b) in this section whilst a sizeable number did not attempt any question at all.

- Q5** Many candidates responded well to this question and were able to identify two reasons for the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001. Some candidates became confused between the Soviet invasion of 1979 and the US invasion of 2001. The examining team also noted that candidates were confused over events and digressed into events in Iraq in 2003.
- Q6 (a)** This was the most popular choice with the majority of candidates able to include some relevant detail in all of the guidelines though there was evidence of candidates struggling with reasons for US involvement in Korea and Vietnam. Candidates should be encouraged to focus on the question stated and be reminded that the guidelines are there to support and scaffold their answers. A significant number of candidates provided a narrative account of the events of the Korean and Vietnam Wars, writing all that they knew rather than explaining why the USA became involved and how they responded to the spread of communism in South East Asia by 1965. Responses to the second guideline, on Korea, were strongest. There were also omissions with a small number ignoring the first guideline entirely. In relation to the guideline on Vietnam, centres should remind candidates to focus on the dates specified in the question; in

this case 1965. The vast majority of candidates who answered this question digressed outside of the time period in the question; focusing on detail including US actions post 1965, opposition to the war and Vietnamisation. These were not credited. Despite this most of the candidates who attempted this question were able to access at least Level 2 marks.

- (b)** This was a less popular choice, though candidate responses to this question tended to be of a better standard. The examining team were impressed with the overall quality of extended writing responses where many candidates were able to use the guidelines effectively to focus on how relations changed between the USA and USSR between 1980 and 1991. There was evidence of clear focus on the policies and actions of both Reagan and Gorbachev. The collapse of communism and end of the Cold War continues to be a challenge for some candidates and this should be an area of focus for centres.

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