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Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

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In History (4HI1) Paper 1R

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Introduction

This paper was sat by a relatively small cohort of candidates as it was 'time-zone' paper.

This was the first examination of the new iGCSE History specification. The assessment requirement was that candidates answer a set of questions from two options from a choice of eight. The most popular options were:

Option 3 : Germany: development of dictatorship, 1918-45

Option 5 : Dictatorship and conflict in the USSR, 1924-53

Option 6 : A world divided: superpower relations, 1943-72

Option 7 : A divided union: civil rights in the USA, 1945-74

and the most popular combination of options was:

Option 3 and 6

Option 3 and 7.

All eight options required candidates to answer three sub-questions on the option topic. Each question had a different focus and tested a range of assessment objectives. Question (a) required candidates to identify the impression given by an author based on a small written extract and tested AO4. Question (b) required candidates to explain two effects and tested AO1 and AO2. Question (ci) and (cii) required candidates explain, analyse and make judgements about key features, events, causes, effects and significance and tested AO1 and AO2.

General comments

Across all eight options the following generic comments in relation to each sub question should be noted:

- In question (a) selecting information to support the impression will limit the answer to marks within level 2, to move in to level 3 the answer requires considering of how the impression has been created by considering author selection of evidence, tone, emphasis or omission.
- In question (b) knowledge of the effect is not in itself sufficient, there is a requirement to explain the effect in terms of outcomes.
- In question (c) knowledge needs to be used to develop answer that considers the issue raised by the question and a criteria based judgement is made.

Option 3: Germany: development of dictatorship, 1918-45

This option was attempted by many candidates and on the whole was answered well. In question (a) many candidates were able to identify that the impression given by the author about the failure of the Munich Putsch was that it was 'Hitler's fault'. Candidates who scored marks in level 2 (3-4 marks) were able to support their inference of the impression by selecting examples of language used by the author. Those candidates who moved into level 3 (5-6 marks) also considered the author's treatment, emphasis and selection of material in order to create the impression that was inferred. Some candidates ignored the focus of the question and took it as an opportunity to write what they knew about the Putsch without reference to the author nor the passage.

In question (b) many candidates were able to explain the effects of the French occupation of the Ruhr. Typically many focused on economic/industrial effect and the effect on workers through passive resistance. Some candidates focused on the political consequences for the Weimar government. All were credit worthy and what differentiated candidates was the accuracy of the information they used (AO1) and the extent of the explanation in relation to the outcome (AO2). It was not enough to state that the occupation led to hyperinflation and passive resistance, for example, without then showing how that impacted on Germany. It is important for candidates to realise that in this question it is about the effect 'of' something 'on' something.

In question (c) (ci) was more popular than (cii). It was noticeable in both questions that many students had in depth knowledge but when coming to a judgement tended to state that something was more important or significant without applying and explaining criteria. Candidates who did secured marks in level 4.

Option 5: Dictatorship and conflict in the USSR, 1924-53

In question (a) many candidates were able identify that the impression was one of rapid, massive or significant change. Candidates supported this by selecting words and phrases used by the author to support the impression. Candidates who considered the emphasis placed by the author on the changes and suggested the author had ignored other aspects of change moved into level 3 (5-6 marks).

In question (b) many candidates were well aware of the purges and who was purged, but did not then consider the impact on the USSR. Also, some candidates used information more relevant to the policy of collectivisation as evidence of the purges and this limited their response.

In question (c) both questions were equally attempted, and while answers were seen that were replete with knowledge, the support, explanation and analysis of judgement was often weaker. In this type of question the aspect of judgement in AO2 is clearly identified in all levels in the mark scheme and the candidate must address it.

Option 6: A world divided: superpower relations, 1943-72

This option was attempted by many candidates and on the whole was answered well. In question (a) many candidates were able to identify the impression given by the author in regard to Truman's towards the Soviet Union. Many inferred that it was 'hostile', or 'uncompromising' or 'aggressive'. Many supported this by selecting the author's language, and those who considered the author's selection and lack of balance moved into level 3 (5-6 marks).

In question (b) many candidates had thorough and precise knowledge regarding the Truman Doctrine, but it was those who applied it to it's effects of 'international relations' that moved into the higher level. Typically candidates who suggested it made USA/USSR relations worse, it triggered

an economic response from the USSR, and it led to an international crisis over Berlin moved into level 3.

In question (c) (cii) was more popular than (ci). In (cii) candidates were well versed in the causes of the Cuban Missiles Crisis and were able to balance their judgement of the stated factor, 'the actions of the USA' with other reasons. In (ci) while candidates were very knowledgeable in relation to soviet control of Hungary, 'international criticism' was less well understood, and some candidates struggled to bring in other aspects in order to help them develop their response.

Option 7: A divided union: civil rights in the USA, 1945-74

In question (a) many candidates were able to identify the impression given by the author regarding the situation Gerald Ford faced as president, but some ignored the reference to 'situation' and just considered Ford as President. Many inferred that the impression was that he face a very 'difficult' or 'challenging' situation and supported this by selecting words and phrases used by the author.

In question (b) candidates who had precise knowledge were able to explain the effect of the USA, while some candidates generalised, e.g. 'it made women equal to men'.

In question (c) (cii) proved to be more popular than (ci). However, the quality that was seen in both responses was very high. Awareness of the significance of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, Brown versus Topeka and Little Rock was very evident, with many candidates able to analyse their impact on the development in civil right rather than just narrate the events. Similarly, the actions of McCarthy, Cold War, Alger Hiss, Hollywood 10 and the Rosenbergs were all analysed as causes of anti-communism in the USA and not just narrated.