

HISTORY

Paper 9769/11
British History Outlines c.300–c.1399

Key messages

- Successful responses showed high level, evaluative skills and included supported judgements, rather than just explanations or description
- The exact wording of the question must be considered
- Interim judgements are often helpful to build a coherent argument

General comments

The candidates' essays were generally well structured. Most showed awareness of a possible discussion: they set this out in their opening paragraph and proposed a point of view. Different elements were discussed, and few offered a predominantly descriptive or narrative approach. Within that framework, most included an explanation of the different elements which, while often sound and supported, did not offer a sustained judgement about the issue in the question. Vital critical elements such as deciding on the relative importance of different factors, or engaging with the concepts in the question, were often missing. In some cases, responses were formulaic in approach and did not consider the exact wording of the question. Few candidates took the opportunity to search for an individual viewpoint, reached by thoughtful personal study, which best satisfied their own view of the past. Instead, many essays were stereotyped in their choice of material and conclusions.

Stronger answers offered sustained judgements; some showed remarkable maturity and independent judgement, and they were sharply focused and personally engaged with the topics. In weaker essays, the candidate's own voice and their considered opinion formed by mature reflection on the topics studied, was stifled by a desire to offer information to support a series of explanations or points. There was some effective use of source material and reference to historical views.

Good responses addressed the questions directly as a priority. Weaker responses answered a different question than the ones set: they referred to irrelevant material or did not include important material pertinent to the question in the paper. Others offered relevant material but neglected to address the precise demands of the question. As this was relatively common, it showed a lack of flexibility in responding to questions and an over-eagerness to reproduce material learnt for the topic. Stronger responses highlighted the ability to adapt and use knowledge, and to support developed arguments.

Stronger responses used effective interim judgements that offered a clear view when contradictory elements had been juxtaposed, for example, showing elements of success and failure in key policies or offering argument and counter-argument about the importance of an element: this was helpful and kept the focus on reaching a judgement about an issue, rather than simply explaining different elements or viewpoints. The conclusions of weaker responses were perfunctory or cut short.

Overall, there was a range of responses from fragmentary description to analysis, which showed a remarkable degree of intellectual maturity and a written style that would not have been out of place in higher education.

Comments on specific questions

The following comments are on questions for which there were a reasonable number of answers.

Question 1

Stronger responses argued that economic factors were the key to instability as once taxation revenues fell, the government could no longer provide security and protection for its people. Weaker responses were very generalised with little precise detail about the situation in Roman Britain in this period, or with much descriptive material about archaeological evidence.

Question 2

There were few strong responses. Most answers were descriptive and focused their description on the coming of the Anglo-Saxons and the reasons for the invasions. Some tried to focus on the terms of the question by considering evidence, such as place names, or by examining debates about conquest or assimilation.

Question 3

Stronger responses suggested that there were similarities in the power of the rulers, the aggressive nature of the kings and the support given to them by their nobles. A key difference in the early part of the period was in the role of Christianity with the proud paganism of Penda much quoted, whereas the conversion of Mercia by Chad led to greater similarity with East Anglia. A further difference quoted was the expansion of Mercia while East Anglia stagnated. Weaker responses described each kingdom in turn with little attempt at any comparison.

Question 4

Stronger responses considered the role of the kings in the conversion to Christianity and the Synod of Whitby. Some were surprisingly critical of Oswald and Oswiu without much evidence being cited. Weaker responses did not appreciate the focus of this question and wrote about the qualities of the kings and little else; they included few references to the cultural achievements of the period apart from passing mentions of Bede.

Question 5

Most responses were well focused and assessed the roles of Augustine, of Gregory VII and of Aethelbert, along with the importance of establishing a monastery at Canterbury.

Question 6

Stronger responses identified a series of possible explanations: these often included the military power to extend their rule and the use they made of the Church. Answers then went on to argue that the rise of Mercia was boosted by Offa's diplomatic ties with Europe and by his reform of government. His coinage was often used as a further example. Most answers referred to the eponymous Dyke, but a few neglected it entirely. The most common judgement was that the long reigns and the foundations laid by Aethelbald were key factors. Weaker answers tended to be an account of the reigns of Aethelbald and Offa, with the factors leading to the development of Mercia largely implicit in the argument. Some also described his relationship with Charlemagne in some detail but without making it directly relevant to the terms of the question.

Question 8

Stronger responses noted that the revival of learning led to an improved bureaucracy and legal system, while the building of burhs, and a kind of standing army and navy were key issues in defeating the Danes. They evaluated the impact of the revival on government with the campaigns against the Danes, and they largely concluded that the former was dependent on the latter. Some argued that Alfred was the instigator of both initiatives, and his impetus was the main factor. There were some weaker answers where the focus was not sufficiently explicit: these diverted into discussions about how far Alfred developed a sense of Englishness and whether the sources exaggerated the extent of his victories against the Danes. Some responses explained his revival of learning but were less successful in showing how this related to his rule as King of Wessex.

Question 11

Stronger responses made some attempt to define Ethelred's aims, which usually included dealing with the Danes and providing good kingship as it was perceived in the period. Assessments of his success varied, but they generally concluded that he failed to deal with Danish incursions and provided poor kingship, as the lack of enthusiasm for his return showed. Some answers took his ability to raise large sums to pay off the Danes as a success, and others pointed to the stability of the coinage. His failure to control his nobility, notably Eadric Streona, was also cited, and the fiasco of St Brice's Day was seen as further evidence for his inability to deal with the Danes.

Question 12

Most responses made a clear comparison between the strengths of Cnut and the weaknesses of his successors; they gave explanations that centred on the different personalities and their different policies, with Cnut's attempts at reconciliation and peace contrasted with the more aggressive and hostile aims of his sons. Many responses were chronological, but this approach was not necessarily weaker. Some weaker responses were very unbalanced with Cnut's achievements taking up most of the discussion.

Question 13

Stronger answers were well focused on the issue of effectiveness, with some variety in their final judgements. Some argued that Edward was very ineffective because of his dependence on the Godwins, and his efforts to break free in 1050-1051 were a disastrous failure. They also credited the successes in Wales and Scotland to the Godwins rather than to Edward himself. His only effective policies were regarding the Church and the preservation of order. Some answers were kinder to Edward, and they noted that he kept the country at peace and was responsible for sending Harold and Tostig to fight in Wales. They added that England prospered so much that it was a desirable conquest for William of Normandy. Most answers concluded that one of Edward's most ineffective policies was his dithering over the succession, which led to the crisis of 1066.

Question 14

Stronger responses to this question focused firmly on the extent of the opposition and argued that the size of the army at Hastings, Harold's ability to muster his men again after Stamford Bridge, the strength of the shield wall and the length of the battle, showed that opposition was substantial. William did not feel sufficiently secure to advance at once on London. Alternatively, other stronger responses pointed out that Harold lacked archers and his refusal to wait before attacking William led to his opposition being weaker. His death was seen as the ultimate factor which disheartened the English and made opposition less substantial. Weaker responses focused on the reasons why William won at Hastings, without making these directly relevant, or moved on to consider the opposition in the period after 1066.

Question 15

Stronger responses explained how Henry improved the administration and the taxation system to provide fairer and more effective government. They often had some sound knowledge about the Exchequer and the Pipe Roll but needed to explain directly how these aspects led to the country being well governed. Some argued that the breakdown of royal authority under Stephen suggested that Henry's reforms relied on a strong king to be effective. Other responses also explored the failure of Henry to make clear provision for the succession as a factor which led to the country becoming much less well governed. Some weaker responses showed insufficient knowledge about how Henry I governed England; they compared him unfavourably with his predecessors, or focused on his exploits in Normandy, or considered how far his methods were brutal, and needed better focus on the terms of the question. Weaker responses gave long explanations of all the details of this issue.

Question 16

Stronger responses argued that the situation Stephen inherited from Henry I, his own shortcomings, the attitude of the baronage and the bishops, and the intransigence of Matilda, were the main explanations for his difficulties. Some weaker responses needed to define their explanations more precisely. Suggesting that the main reason was the Anarchy, led to generalised arguments with minimal support. Others barely referred to Matilda and saw the ambitious and unruly barons as the issue. In many responses, more supporting detail would have made their arguments stronger.

Question 17

Most answers were able to identify strengths and weaknesses in the way Henry II governed England. Some weaker answers strayed too far into discussion of his French empire or his activities on the peripheries of England. Stronger answers made some of this material relevant by focusing on the strengthening of his borders to make England more secure. Generally, the answers suggested that Henry's legal reforms, by providing a fairer justice system and reducing the power of sheriffs, were a strength. Some weaker answers described the various reforms in some detail but did not show explicitly why they strengthened government. There was general agreement that the quarrel with Becket and his murder weakened Henry's government reputationally, but that his control of the Church was maintained despite this.

Question 18

Most answers saw the need to make 'selfish' their central focus. Stronger answers argued that Richard's preoccupation with the Crusade meant his initial actions in England were largely selfish and his fund-raising methods reflected this. His lax provisions for the government of England in his absence were also seen as showing his selfishness. Other aspects of his reign were seen as less selfish. His crusading exploits, although not part of his role as king of England, were argued to bring the country renown and reflect his reputation as a Christian ruler. His appointment of Hubert Walter was similarly cited as a sign that he was concerned to ensure England was well governed, so not a selfish act. Some weaker answers then digressed into detailed descriptions of Walter's achievements. Richard's insistence on the recovery of his French domains was viewed as essential for the security of England by some but as selfish by others. Most answers to this question were well focused and tried to weigh up the degree to which Richard was selfish.

Question 19

The focus of this question was on the loss of the lands in 1204. Weaker responses included the quarrel with the papacy and even Magna Carta as explanations for the loss of the French lands. Stronger responses dealt fully with John's incompetence, citing his provocative actions over his marriage and his refusal to obey when summoned to Philip's court, along with the rift with William des Roches, the murder of Arthur and his inertia over the defence of Normandy. Other explanations centred on the inherent problems with the Angevin empire and the superior abilities and resources of Philip II. Some weaker responses described these issues and did not make it sufficiently clear exactly how they contributed to the loss of the French lands. Stronger responses suggested that the loyalty of the French nobles to John wavered and so made him vulnerable, while the wealth of Philip allowed the French king to hire more mercenaries and strengthen his military efforts.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/12
British History Outlines c.1399–c.1760

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Overall, there was a range of responses from fragmentary description to analysis, which showed a remarkable degree of intellectual maturity and a written style that would not have been out of place in higher education.

Comments on specific questions

The following comments are on questions for which there were a reasonable number of answers.

Question 8

Stronger answers stressed the strengths of the late-medieval Church and its devotional practices, and the evidence from wills, and fraternities and the enrichment of ecclesiastical building. They also quoted the case of Richard Hunne and the subsequent proceedings to show how anti-clericalism could be a threat. Weaker responses described ways in which anti-clericalism was displayed with reference to writers such as Skelton, Colet and Fish, or to the abuses personified by Wolsey; they were less able to discuss whether it was a serious problem.

Question 9

The candidates' answers were often limited. Most described the opposition and how it was dealt with, then concluded that Henry's hostility was the reason for its failure.

Question 11

Stronger responses defined what constituted a crisis and so had a criterion against which to make a judgement. Most argued that 'continuous' was going too far; many decided that, as most of the problems exhibited in the protectorate of Somerset, they were tackled with some success by Northumberland, so there was not much of a crisis at all. Many pointed out that the minority was not a crisis as such, since it was ephemeral. Weaker responses gave an account of the events of the reign then asserted that these showed that there was a continuous crisis; they did not show sufficient discrimination so made no distinction between political, economic, and religious issues. Some did suggest that 1549 and the attempted coup of 1553 were the most likely moments of crisis, but they did not always explain clearly why that was the case.

Question 12

The responses showed there was a good understanding of the aims of Mary I in religion and offered some sound assessment of her success. Stronger responses showed an awareness of the debate about the extent to which Mary utilised the tools of the Counter-Reformation and nearly all concluded that the shortness of the reign meant her success was very limited. Some included discussion of her marriage as part of her attempts to restore Catholicism and argued that the failure to produce an heir was a factor in her final failure. There was some good, detailed knowledge of the reforms that Mary undertook. Weaker responses wanted to broaden out their discussion to consider Mary's economic and financial policies; these were not relevant to the terms of the question. Some were very assertive and claimed Mary was or was not successful without giving much evidence either way.

Question 13

Strong responses suggested that the vigour of Elizabeth's reaction indicated she thought the activities of the Puritans were a threat and explained how they challenged the authority of queen and prelates, so sought to undermine the very foundation of the Elizabethan Church. Weaker responses described the activities of the Puritans, with varying degrees of accuracy, and the measures Elizabeth employed to counter them, but did not focus on how far they were a threat. Some of their coverage was incomplete, neglecting aspects such as the campaign in the House of Commons and issues such as the Marprelate tracts.

Question 15

Stronger responses referred to the role of the Council in advising the Queen over the Anjou marriage and in effecting the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots. There was some consideration of the problems it faced in the latter years of the reign. Weak responses exhibited an inability to be clear about the function of the Council in government. They argued that it was ineffective as it was riven by factionalism, instead it was forced to use pressure from MPs to get Elizabeth to do as it wished. They did not point out that the Council governed the country quite effectively during most of the reign.

Question 16

Strong answers argued forcefully that finance was the key to the relationship as it impinged on so many other issues. James' extravagance was well documented, and the mistrust engendered by financial affairs was clearly analysed. There was some sound discussion of the impact of the failure of the Great Contract. Other aspects considered included foreign policy and religion. These were viewed as of lesser significance as there was a greater degree of agreement on these matters. Weaker responses lacked sufficient detail or described James' methods of raising money without much analysis. Some tried to argue that the House of Commons deprived James of subsidies to prevent him from ruling without Parliament; they needed more support for this view. In weaker responses there was a general assumption that significance meant a bad relationship.

Question 17

Stronger responses showed how the financial policies raised money, therefore effective, and they referred to the social policies which led to peace and prosperity. They also showed that Laud and Charles brought the Church effectively into line, even if this was much disliked. They included some discussion about how widespread the opposition actually was. They then argued that after 1637, the government was rather less effective, and they showed how it had fallen apart by 1640. Some weaker responses described the methods used by Charles I to govern England, then asserted that these were unpopular hence ineffective. Some did not take account of the wording of the question which referred only to England, so the government of Scotland and Ireland, when included in answers, was irrelevant. Some weaker responses had a narrow focus on finance and religion, and Wentworth and Thorough were barely mentioned.

Question 18

There were few strong responses. The question referred to the role of the Scots and Irish over a longer period than just that of the First Civil War; the responses did not go beyond 1645, so had considerable gaps in their coverage. There was little knowledge of the role of the Irish, though the Scottish intervention was better known, and the Solemn League and Covenant were explained, along with the pivotal role of the Scottish army. The Second Civil War was not mentioned. The responses then digressed into other aspects of the Civil War, which were not the focus of the question.

Question 19

Good responses showed detailed knowledge of the Restoration Settlement and were generally well directed at the question. They tended to see the situation in 1641 as the one that was most fully restored and discussed royal prerogatives, finance, religious toleration, and land issues. Stronger responses concluded that the situation in 1660 was much the same as in 1641, with the power of the monarch dependent on parliamentary grants and the prerogative much reduced as it had been by the Long Parliament. Weaker responses described the Declaration of Breda and the acts passed by the Cavalier Parliament.

Question 20

Strong responses dealt with the longer-term issues, such as James's Roman Catholicism and perceived pursuit of autocratic monarchy and, having established this context, then analysed the actions which built up the suspicions of his subjects. There were some impressive responses where James's actions in 1687-1688, the European situation and the birth of a son, were all seen as triggers for the invitation to William III and as reasons for him to accept the offer. These responses recognised that the shortness of the reign was dependent primarily on these factors, and some argued that James' rapid flight was the final factor confirming his downfall. Weaker responses did not focus sufficiently on the issue of the shortness of the reign; they wrote more generally about the downfall of James II, or they asserted he was an inept ruler, which explained his problems.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/13
British History Outlines c.1760–c.2010

Key messages

- Successful essays showed high level thinking skills of evaluation and included supported judgements, rather than just explanation or description
- The exact wording of the question must be considered
- Interim judgements are often helpful to build a coherent argument

General comments

The candidates' essays were generally well structured. Most showed awareness of a possible discussion: they set this out in their opening paragraph and proposed a point of view. Different elements were discussed, and few offered a predominantly descriptive or narrative approach. Within that framework, most included an explanation of the different elements which, while often sound and supported, did not offer a sustained judgement about the issue in the question. Vital critical elements such as deciding on the relative importance of different factors, or engaging with the concepts in the question, were often missing. In some cases, responses were formulaic in approach and did not consider the exact wording of the question. Few candidates took the opportunity to search for an individual viewpoint, reached by thoughtful personal study, which best satisfied their own view of the past. Instead, many essays were stereotyped in their choice of material and conclusions.

Stronger answers offered sustained judgements; some showed remarkable maturity and independent judgement, and they were sharply focused and personally engaged with the topics. In weaker essays, the candidate's own voice and their considered opinion formed by mature reflection on the topics studied, was stifled by a desire to offer information to support a series of explanations or points. There was some effective use of source material and reference to historical views.

Good responses addressed the questions directly as a priority. Weaker responses answered a different question than the ones set: they referred to irrelevant material or did not include important material pertinent to the question in the paper. Others offered relevant material but neglected to address the precise demands of the question. As this was relatively common, it showed a lack of flexibility in responding to questions and an over-eagerness to reproduce material learnt for the topic. Stronger responses highlighted the ability to adapt and use knowledge, and to support developed arguments.

Stronger responses used effective interim judgements that offered a clear view when contradictory elements had been juxtaposed, for example, showing elements of success and failure in key policies or offering argument and counter-argument about the importance of an element: this was helpful and kept the focus on reaching a judgement about an issue, rather than simply explaining different elements or viewpoints. The conclusions of weaker responses were perfunctory or cut short.

Overall, there was a range of responses from fragmentary description to analysis, which showed a remarkable degree of intellectual maturity and a written style that would not have been out of place in higher education.

Comments on specific questions

The following comments are on questions for which there were a reasonable number of answers.

Question 2

Stronger answers dealt with 'obstinacy' and 'rebelliousness' and covered a reasonable amount of the tensions between 1763 and 1775. There were some perceptive analyses of how far the British were prepared to modify their policies, and whether colonial attitudes went beyond 'rebelliousness' and were based on legitimate grievance and lack of understanding of their rights by Britain. Weaker answers offered a list of grievances, sometimes not going much beyond 1768, with some comment focused on the question but not basing their responses firmly on the concepts it contained.

Question 4

Most responses concentrated on financial policies and understanding was variable, especially about the role of the Sinking Fund. Stronger responses dealt directly with 'effective' and analysed the effects of the policies in the light of the situation that Pitt faced; the range of domestic policies tended to be rather narrow. Some responses drifted into the repression of the war years.

Question 6

Most answers focused on the radical challenges to the exclusion of other problems. The thrust was mainly on how well Lord Liverpool dealt with the unrest, sometimes to the detriment of an analysis of the nature of the challenge. Some argued that the severity of the official response indicated that for contemporaries the unrest was a serious problem, though in reality the limited revolutionary potential and localised nature of the disturbances indicated otherwise. Less successful answers tended to list instances of unrest and describe repressive measures without a consistent focus on 'serious'.

Question 8

A few candidates saw 'parliamentary reform' as measures enacted by the Whigs in the 1830s, such as the Municipal Corporations Act and the abolition of Slavery. Good responses were restricted, wisely, to the possible explanations of Grey's support for the reform of Parliament and there were some strong answers which weighed the different factors: the extra-parliamentary agitation, the long-term commitment to reform and theories about preserving the aristocratic power by making concessions, and the short-term political advantages of taking advantage of Tory divisions. Some used their knowledge of the Reform Act to argue about motivation; some just described the terms without aligning this knowledge to the question.

Question 9

Stronger answers discussed different reasons and evaluated the often repeated, but not always justified view, that internal divisions were the main reason for failure. There was supported judgement in many of these answers. Weaker answers dealt more with whether Chartism had its origins in economic rather than political unrest and did not focus entirely on the failure or show much appreciation of the internal divisions.

Question 11

Stronger responses tried to engage with the significance in terms of urban improvement, the development of unions and the political development of Conservatism. Some discussed whether the changes were a significant break with what had gone before in Gladstone's ministry. Some struggled with how to assess 'significant' and to focus on 'brought about' preferring to consider motivation rather than impact. Weaker responses offered a list of reforms with some comments about limitations.

Question 12

There were some developed analyses of how far Liberal weaknesses and the alienation of some of the electorate explains the result, compared with the appeal and organisation of Disraeli's Conservative opposition. Weaker responses seemed to be trying to adapt knowledge of the successes and limitations of Gladstone's policies. There were some exaggerated claims that the loss of upper-class support was significant, and analyses of Ireland did not very successfully link knowledge of policies there to the election.

Question 14

This was often approached in terms of a list of reasons which scarcely included Balfour's leadership. There was some good knowledge about some of the issues and some appreciation of Liberal recovery. Tariff Reform, and the emotive issue of the threat to cheap food and one of the iconic elements of the Victorian era, was often not considered, or it was given limited treatment. Balfour's responsibility was poorly linked to his position on Tariff Reform but better linked to the 1902 Education Act: the significance of which was not well understood. The issue of Chinese Slavery was also not well understood.

Question 15

The concept of 'terminal decline' was challenging for some; there was some discussion about whether serious problems from 1911 or divisions in the war years better explained decline. Some answers saw the 1910 elections as major and spectacular victories for the Liberals, while those who argued for the opposite view overestimated the growth of Labour before 1914.

Question 16

This question attracted some defences of Haig and his fellow leaders, in terms of the situation offering alternatives to costly frontal assaults. However, this was not quite the point. Few responses mentioned revisionist military analyses suggesting tactical innovation and final victory by a combined arms strategy in 1918. Knowledge of major battles was sometimes inaccurate.

Question 18

Stronger answers looked at Baldwin's political abilities and included discussions about the wisdom of letting Labour take office in 1924, of his handling of the General Strike and the reasons for the loss of the 1929 General Election. Most answers did not attempt to discuss 1931, while others considered the 1930s. Weaker responses offered unbalanced accounts of the General Strike with limited treatment of the whole period.

Question 21

There were some strong answers which engaged with 'opportunity' and offered some balanced and developed judgements. Some argued plausibly that the problems of post-war Britain did not offer a good opportunity for costly and fundamental reform, and that Labour had little to 'waste' and did well to achieve the changes they did in an unfavourable situation. Others took a more familiar line and pointed to the limitations of change at a time when Labour had unprecedented electoral support and there was a real desire for a new state and a fairer society. There were some over estimations of the impact of nationalisation, but some better treatment of social reforms.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/21
European History Outlines
c.300–c.1461

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Comments on specific questions

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Question 3

Stronger responses argued that the barbarian invasions were the final blow to an empire already in decline and showed some awareness of the advances of the Huns and the Goths. Most responses did not focus sufficiently on the given date and gave extensive analyses of the long-term causes, often going back to the third century. Weaker responses also lacked much specific knowledge of events.

Question 5

Stronger responses weighed up the factors effectively and came to a variety of conclusions. Some argued that the nature of the Caliphate with some competent rulers and wise policies towards conquered peoples was the main factor, while others suggested that the appeal of Islam and the foundations laid by Mohammed were the key explanations. Some showed good, detailed knowledge about the advance of the Caliphate. A few weaker responses dismissed the factor in the question too readily and without sufficient consideration of the weaknesses of the Persian and Byzantine empires.

Question 7

Most answers to this question were well focused; there were few weak responses. Strong responses gave a sound assessment of the various factors. Some concluded that the military achievements were the main explanation with the battle of Tours often cited. Others saw the abilities of Charles Martel and Pepin to exploit the circumstances they faced as more vital, while a few argued that the defects of the Merovingian 'do-nothing' kings meant that the early Carolingians did not have a difficult task in seizing power.

Question 8

Strong responses considered Charlemagne's aims to judge his effectiveness. Many concluded that his relationship with the papacy, his stress on Church reform and all that it entailed, and his advancement of Christianity, were all effective, while his problems with the Saxons and the repetition of his Capitularies suggested that there were real limits to his achievements. There was some good discussion of the reliability of the sources in assessing what Charlemagne achieved. Weaker responses described his religious policies but did not cite much evidence to show how far they were effective. Some suggested that Charlemagne's military campaigns were specifically religious policies, and much of their answer assessed the effectiveness of these in terms of conquest rather than religion. Some responses did not have enough detailed knowledge of the religious policies to make a developed answer.

Question 10

There were few strong responses to this question. The weaker responses showed very little detailed understanding of the Investiture Contest or what it was about, beyond a few references to simony, resulting in very vague conclusions.

Question 11

There were no strong responses. The responses had little detailed knowledge of Otto beyond the suggestion that he managed to establish his authority in Germany more effectively by defeating the princes.

Question 12

Strong responses cited the way in which the monarchs dealt with their major baronial rivals and the support they gained from the Church. They also suggested that the length of the reigns and a good deal of luck helped to bring about improvements in France. Weaker responses argued that the role of the monarchs was minimal and moved on to other explanations. The factor in the question needs to be discussed adequately.

Question 14

There were many strong responses; these were well focused on the terms of the question and reached supported judgements. Religious motivation was seen in the sermon at Clermont, the desire to re-establish control of Jerusalem, the attraction of remission for sins, and the chivalric ideals of the day. Answers also referred to the impact of religion on the progress of the Crusade, with the discovery of the Holy Lance at Antioch and the approach to Jerusalem as a pilgrimage. Other factors were analysed such as: the desire to leave famine-stricken France; the secular motives of Urban; the ambitions of some knights, personified by Bohemond refusing to give up Antioch and simple greed, shown in the attacks on Jews in Germany; and, in the sack of Jerusalem. The judgements varied with some maintaining that in a religious age, religion was bound to be the main motivator, while others argued that worldly ambition could be the vital factor, or that motives were often mixed. There were few weak responses: these were generally unbalanced, arguing solely for one motive. There were some answers that thought Jesus was born in Jerusalem.

Question 15

Strong responses identified a series of explanations, which usually included the defects in the leadership of Conrad and Louis, the lack of help from Byzantium, the disastrous siege of Damascus, the disunity among the Crusaders, contrasted with the united Muslim response and the lack of a clear aim once it became obvious that Edessa could not be retaken. Most concluded that it was the weak leadership which was largely to blame and had no difficulty in providing support for this judgement. Weaker responses had insufficient detail in their exposition of the factors. Some did not mention Conrad and only vaguely outlined the events at Damascus.

Question 16

There were few strong responses. Weak responses lacked sufficient information on what Barbarossa did to be able to mount a convincing argument. They asserted that he became more powerful at the expense of the princes and the Pope, but they could not relate this to whether it was a new or old role for the Holy Roman Emperor. They viewed his attacks on Italy as a new role; some responses included much detail about these incursions but did not relate it well to the terms of the question.

Question 17

There were no strong responses. The responses asserted that Philip II was powerful but were not able to offer sufficient evidence to support the view. They suggested he increased royal authority and revenue, but exactly how he achieved this was not adequately explained.

Question 18

Strong responses identified Innocent's aims as a way of judging what he achieved. Answers worked through Innocent's hopes of eradicating heresy, winning back the Holy Land, reforming the Church and maintaining papal supremacy. The general view was that his achievements with the Lateran Council and the Papal States were considerable but that he failed with the Crusades. The latter was often blamed on circumstances beyond his control. Regarding Philip II and King John, opinion was more divided: some argued that Innocent failed as both held out against him and others argued that both had to give in eventually, albeit for pragmatic reasons. Weaker responses tended to focus on the crusades and the kings, so needed a better balance. Some credited Innocent with being on the Second Crusade. The crusade against the Cathars was judged by some to be an achievement and by others a failure.

Question 28

There were few strong responses. Weak responses were narrative in their approach, outlining the conquests of the Ottomans and then arguing that their system of recruitment accounted for their successes. The role of the Sultans and the fall of Constantinople were also mentioned; the level of analysis was not very high.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/22
European History Outlines
c.1461–c.1774

Key messages

- Successful responses showed high level, evaluative skills and included supported judgements, rather than just explanations or description
- The exact wording of the question must be considered
- Interim judgements are often helpful to build a coherent argument

General comments

The candidates' essays were generally well structured. Most showed awareness of a possible discussion: they set this out in their opening paragraph and proposed a point of view. Different elements were discussed, and few offered a predominantly descriptive or narrative approach. Within that framework, most included an explanation of the different elements which, while often sound and supported, did not offer a sustained judgement about the issue in the question. Vital critical elements such as deciding on the relative importance of different factors, or engaging with the concepts in the question, were often missing. In some cases, responses were formulaic in approach and did not consider the exact wording of the question. Few candidates took the opportunity to search for an individual viewpoint, reached by thoughtful personal study, which best satisfied their own view of the past. Instead, many essays were stereotyped in their choice of material and conclusions.

Stronger answers offered sustained judgements; some showed remarkable maturity and independent judgement, and they were sharply focused and personally engaged with the topics. In weaker essays, the candidate's own voice and their considered opinion formed by mature reflection on the topics studied, was stifled by a desire to offer information to support a series of explanations or points. There was some effective use of source material and reference to historical views.

Good responses addressed the questions directly as a priority. Weaker responses answered a different question than the ones set: they referred to irrelevant material or did not include important material pertinent to the question in the paper. Others offered relevant material but neglected to address the precise demands of the question. As this was relatively common, it showed a lack of flexibility in responding to questions and an over-eagerness to reproduce material learnt for the topic. Stronger responses highlighted the ability to adapt and use knowledge, and to support developed arguments.

Stronger responses used effective interim judgements that offered a clear view when contradictory elements had been juxtaposed, for example, showing elements of success and failure in key policies or offering argument and counter-argument about the importance of an element: this was helpful and kept the focus on reaching a judgement about an issue, rather than simply explaining different elements or viewpoints. The conclusions of weaker responses were perfunctory or cut short.

Overall, there was a range of responses from fragmentary description to analysis, which showed a remarkable degree of intellectual maturity and a written style that would not have been out of place in higher education.

Comments on specific questions

The following comments are on questions for which there were a reasonable number of answers.

Question 6

There were few strong responses. Weak responses did not focus sufficiently on Calvin in Geneva but wrote in general terms about the appeal of Calvinism, citing the organisation of the Church, the doctrine of double predestination and the clarity of the message. Some went on to explain why Calvinism developed in France or Scotland, which was not relevant to development in Geneva.

Question 9

Most answers were able to identify the factors that made Suleiman so successful. They focused on the strength of his army and his development of a navy, his administrative system (which gave him sufficient revenue) and his leadership skills. The latter included knowing when his empire had reached its limits. Weaker responses tended to describe these factors, while stronger answers evaluated them against the weaknesses of his enemies. Some responses were not able to cite much evidence to show his enemies were weak; stronger answers pointed to the preoccupations of Charles V, the way Francis I allied with the Turks and the weakness of Louis II. Most concluded that given his many advantages, Suleiman would have developed his empire in any case.

Question 11

Strong responses focused on Philip's desire to keep Spain catholic, to maintain royal control of the Church and his actions against the Moriscos. His personal piety was often mentioned. Other motivations included law and order and finance, with the conclusion that religion was a vital motivation for the Spanish king. Weaker answers lacked a clear structure and argued that Philip was motivated by religion, but then could only illustrate their views with vague references to the Inquisition and the papacy. They did not provide a convincing alternative perspective. Some moved on to examine Philip's policies in the Mediterranean and the Netherlands, although the question specified policies in Spain. His desire to defeat Protestant powers could be seen as relevant but needed to be framed in those terms.

Question 12

Strong responses showed that the origins of the French Civil Wars were often religious but that the chief issues at stake changed as they proceeded, ending with the question of the succession being dominant. Weaker responses were not focused on what the French Civil Wars were about but on why they went on so long. They also tended to give an account of them then conclude that this showed they were or were not about religion.

Question 15

Most responses included financial reforms as part of their discussion of economic recovery. Strong responses argued that ending the Civil Wars and settling the religious issues were Henry's major achievements, as they provided a more stable society and hence the conditions for economic recovery. Some argued that Sully was the spearhead for economic recovery, so he was responsible rather than Henry IV. There was some useful discussion about how far Henry IV was ready to jeopardise the recovery with an aggressive foreign policy in 1610. Weaker responses were not able to say very much in detail about the economic recovery beyond a reference to Sully and very little discussion of mercantilism.

Question 16

Strong responses were able to discuss the grievances of the princes and the Parlement but these had very limited detailed knowledge. Others argued that they were caused by the harshness of Richelieu's policies, then examined these in some detail. There were some very weak responses that suggested the Frondes were popular uprisings, these responses had very little accurate knowledge about their causes.

Question 17

There were no strong responses. The responses lacked sufficient detailed knowledge of seventeenth-century Spain to reach any convincing conclusions. They were not familiar with the policies of Lerma or Olivares; they concentrated on the economic factors and the weakening impact of the expulsion of the Moriscos, and the falling population.

Question 21

Strong responses were able to evaluate a series of factors, and most balanced economic prosperity against the leadership of Frederick William and the strength of his army. They included good, detailed knowledge which was well used to reach a supported judgement. There were no weak responses.

Question 22

Strong answers had a good understanding of the role of Louis XIV in his government: they argued effectively that he was the moving force in his administration and in his control of the Church. The alternative perspective came mainly from an assessment of the contribution of Colbert, with the final judgement being that Louis' well-known personal assessment was accurate.

Question 25

Strong answers set out the position in Russia on Peter's accession and contrasted it with the situation at his death; they generally concluded that he had made Russia stronger, but the country remained relatively backward as compared with Western Europe. There was good analysis of his ambitious aims and the problems he met in trying to reach them. Weaker responses described his policies, often with limited support.

Question 30

Strong responses argued that Louis XV's achievements were few and entering the conflict with the Paris Parlement was unwise. The issues with the Jansenists were well covered in these responses. Weaker responses appeared to know more about the private life of Louis XV and the fact that he led his troops in person, than about how he governed France. He was considered ineffective, nevertheless.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/23
European History Outlines
c.1774–c.2000

Key messages

- Successful responses showed high level, evaluative skills and included supported judgements, rather than just explanation or description
- The exact wording of the question must be considered
- Interim judgements are often helpful to build a coherent argument

General comments

The candidates' essays were generally well structured. Most showed awareness of a possible discussion: they set this out in their opening paragraph and proposed a point of view. Different elements were discussed, and few offered a predominantly descriptive or narrative approach. Within that framework, most included an explanation of the different elements which, while often sound and supported, did not offer a sustained judgement about the issue in the question. Vital critical elements such as deciding on the relative importance of different factors, or engaging with the concepts in the question, were often missing. In some cases, responses were formulaic in approach and did not consider the exact wording of the question. Few candidates took the opportunity to search for an individual viewpoint, reached by thoughtful personal study, which best satisfied their own view of the past. Instead, many essays were stereotyped in their choice of material and conclusions.

Stronger answers offered sustained judgements; some showed remarkable maturity and independent judgement, and they were sharply focused and personally engaged with the topics. In weaker essays, the candidate's own voice and their considered opinion formed by mature reflection on the topics studied, was stifled by a desire to offer information to support a series of explanations or points. There was some effective use of source material and reference to historical views.

Good responses addressed the questions directly as a priority. Weaker responses answered a different question than the ones set: they referred to irrelevant material or did not include important material pertinent to the question in the paper. Others offered relevant material but neglected to address the precise demands of the question. As this was relatively common, it showed a lack of flexibility in responding to questions and an over-eagerness to reproduce material learnt for the topic. Stronger responses highlighted the ability to adapt and use knowledge, and to support developed arguments.

Stronger responses used effective interim judgements that offered a clear view when contradictory elements had been juxtaposed, for example, showing elements of success and failure in key policies or offering argument and counter-argument about the importance of an element: this was helpful and kept the focus on reaching a judgement about an issue, rather than simply explaining different elements or viewpoints. The conclusions of weaker responses were perfunctory or cut short.

Overall, there was a range of responses from fragmentary description to analysis, which showed a remarkable degree of intellectual maturity and a written style that would not have been out of place in higher education.

Comments on specific questions

The following comments are on questions for which there were a reasonable number of answers.

Question 2

Many answers argued that the French Revolution was brought about by class conflict and there was nothing Louis XVI could do about it, so he was not personally responsible. Moreover, he could do nothing about the antiquated financial system as this had somehow always existed and was quite independent of him. In some essays, Louis was barely mentioned. This unbalanced approach was not often convincingly argued, as class conflict was not much explored beyond a description of the three estates and noble privilege. Stronger answers did place some focus on Louis, though they were often confined to the cost of the US War and his mistakes in 1789 regarding the Estates General. Very few discussed the attempts at reform. Economic grievances and the financial situation were often run together making the deficit somehow responsible for poor harvests and starvation. There was often no explanation of why financial problems brought about revolution. Some answers did try and tackle textbook orthodoxy, by suggesting that the role of the deficit had been exaggerated and that Louis XVI's personal inadequacies might be overstated. Several gave list-like answers which might have been produced as responses to any question on the cause of the Revolution; some others gave no consideration of the developments of 1789.

Question 5

Many answers became a list of reasons for Napoleon's downfall rather than a direct answer to the question; several stated that he declined after 1807 without seemingly realising it took another seven years to defeat him. The crucial years of 1813-1814 received relatively little attention and few considered the view that Napoleon could have survived had it not been for his flawed personality: it took a while for the allies to realise he would not stop and could not be trusted.

Question 6

Many answers took the view that the settlement of the Congress of Vienna was a complete failure because it ignored liberalism and nationalism, whose support was considerably over estimated, and because war broke out again in the 1850s. Stronger answers did attempt a balance, stating that France was successfully contained by the *cordon sanitaire*, conceding that balancing competing demands of the victorious powers and ushering in nearly forty years of peace was something of an achievement.

Question 8

Several answers took the view that economic strength was paramount because without it there would be no army. How unification would have come about by economic forces alone was rarely explained, particularly as it had often already been conceded that the *Zollverein* did not lead to political unity. Stronger answers did focus on the military strength as the real key without discounting the importance of the economy. However, the main problem with many answers was that the focus turned to Bismarck as more important than either of the two strengths in the question. The fact that the question was not about Bismarck *per se* was not always appreciated and weakened many responses.

Question 9

The fact that 'a new Italian state' could refer to Cavour's plan for a northern Italian kingdom was not apparent in many of the answers: it was simply interpreted as unification. This enabled many to decide on Garibaldi, as he was the only one who really wanted unification. Stronger answers understood that Garibaldi's expedition would not have been possible without Cavour's initial achievements, though his role annexing the duchies and three quarters of the Papal States was often overlooked. Many responses decided that neither was as important as Napoleon III and wrote about him, at length, but this was not the question.

Question 11

Strong responses realised that the Tsar wanted to modernise the country without diluting autocracy, and these worked quite well. Weaker responses listed the reforms with some comments on their limitations. Many showed superficial understanding of the reforms. Firstly, the context of the Crimean humiliation was often ignored: this was the spur. Secondly, all other reforms stemmed from the emancipation thus the peasants had to be invested with legal identity, hence the legal reforms; the noble control of the countryside had to remain in place, hence the *zemstvo* (this was frequently unexplained); and, serfs could no longer be impressed into the army, hence the military reforms. The reforms were usually treated independently without any understanding of how they were related. Thirdly, their success was often underestimated or omitted altogether. Many answers simply asserted that the reforms were complete failures and inexorably led to the collapse of Tsardom in 1917.

Question 13

Many answers argued that in the light of 1917, everything Nicholas did was ineffective. The view that it was the war that caused the Revolution was somewhat neglected. There were some balanced answers which argued that the Duma was to some extent emasculated, but it still existed, and that Stolypin's agricultural reforms were needed. In Stolypin's own words, 'Twenty years but still two and a half million peasants left the Mir and because of good weather there were bumper harvests 1909-1914.' The countryside was quiet in 1914. Russia exported more than it imported, and government finances were sound. Most responses listed the Tsar's personal weaknesses and the problems of the state without really relating these to the situation in 1914, and some spent a lot of the essay on the events of 1905.

Question 19

There were some effective analyses which offered judgement and were not just a list of factors. The weaknesses of the Whites were discussed though often with little factual detail, whereas the strengths of the Reds did have greater depth. The role of Lenin was usually foremost; weaker answers tended to omit his early Decrees on Land, Peace and Workers, as well as the Constituent Assembly and would start with the Civil War. Moreover, some had weak chronology dealing with the NEP (the weakest answers left this out) before War Communism (which sometimes was not explained). The strongest answers were more thorough and analysed both Lenin's ruthlessness (the Red Terror) and flexibility (ideological compromise).

Question 23

More effective answers engaged with what was best for the Soviet Union. Some argued persuasively that in the face of a hostile capitalist world, preparation for war was vital. Few mentioned the context of the war scare of the late 1920s. Some answers appreciated that collectivisation was all about providing capital for industrialisation and food for the proletariat. Some did argue that his policies did serve the best interests of the Soviet Union, as victory in the Great Patriotic War indicated; they balanced this by consideration of suffering and the effects of dictatorial personal rule. Weaker answers tended to neglect effective discussion and definition of interests

Question 26

Most responses were rather superficial. Many omitted Khrushchev's 1956 speech. Some responses were contradictory by stating that he did try to change Communist rule by relaxing repression and devolving the economy while keeping one party rule, but, ultimately, he did not change Communist rule at all because his policies failed. This demonstrates the dangers of juxtaposing different views without coming to a conclusion. Where there were interim judgements and an attempt to come to a judgement, answers were more effective.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/03
United States History Outlines
c.1750–c.2005

Key messages

- Successful responses showed high level, evaluative skills and included supported judgements, rather than just explanations or description
- The exact wording of the question must be considered
- Interim judgements are often helpful to build a coherent argument

General comments

The candidates' essays were generally well structured. Most showed awareness of a possible discussion: they set this out in their opening paragraph and proposed a point of view. Different elements were discussed, and few offered a predominantly descriptive or narrative approach. Within that framework, most included an explanation of the different elements which, while often sound and supported, did not offer a sustained judgement about the issue in the question. Vital critical elements such as deciding on the relative importance of different factors, or engaging with the concepts in the question, were often missing. In some cases, responses were formulaic in approach and did not consider the exact wording of the question. Few candidates took the opportunity to search for an individual viewpoint, reached by thoughtful personal study, which best satisfied their own view of the past. Instead, many essays were stereotyped in their choice of material and conclusions.

Stronger answers offered sustained judgements; some showed remarkable maturity and independent judgement, and they were sharply focused and personally engaged with the topics. In weaker essays, the candidate's own voice and their considered opinion formed by mature reflection on the topics studied, was stifled by a desire to offer information to support a series of explanations or points. There was some effective use of source material and reference to historical views.

Good responses addressed the questions directly as a priority. Weaker responses answered a different question than the ones set: they referred to irrelevant material or did not include important material pertinent to the question in the paper. Others offered relevant material but neglected to address the precise demands of the question. As this was relatively common, it showed a lack of flexibility in responding to questions and an over-eagerness to reproduce material learnt for the topic. Stronger responses highlighted the ability to adapt and use knowledge, and to support developed arguments.

Stronger responses used effective interim judgements that offered a clear view when contradictory elements had been juxtaposed, for example, showing elements of success and failure in key policies or offering argument and counter-argument about the importance of an element: this was helpful and kept the focus on reaching a judgement about an issue, rather than simply explaining different elements or viewpoints. The conclusions of weaker responses were perfunctory or cut short.

Overall, there was a range of responses from fragmentary description to analysis, which showed a remarkable degree of intellectual maturity and a written style that would not have been out of place in higher education.

Comments on specific questions

The following comments are on questions for which there were a reasonable number of answers.

Question 1

Good responses showed a range of issues which caused tension; some struggled with the concept of ‘restrictions on individual liberty’ and made their answers a discussion of the importance of taxation as an issue. There were some well-focused discussions which set restrictions against wider differences; some weaker answers restricted the time frame and gave little consideration to the developments after 1770 or, in some cases, 1768. Some answers inadequately considered the escalation of tension after 1773.

Question 3

Strong responses dealt with the whole period of debate well. There was an understanding of some of the issues surrounding the Constitution and many took the view that the balance between the rights of individual states and the powers of the federal government was the issue which caused most concern. However, this was a question about the discussions, and the relative level of controversy in those discussions of the Constitution issue; weaker responses treated it as a general survey of reasons why a stronger constitution was thought necessary.

Question 4

There was a strong focus on evaluating the effectiveness of policies and most answers dealt with the whole period, identifying both successes and failures. Many answers offered a balanced view though some aspects were rather neglected, notably the decisions that led to the war of 1812. There were some attempts to analyse the long-term effects of the Monroe Doctrine.

Question 5

Stronger answers tried to weigh the different social, political, and economic explanations. The nature and limitations of opposition were often neglected. Many answers showed consideration of the recognition given to slavery by the Constitution; they were less certain about the significance of the provision of the Three-fifths Compromise. Weaker answers gave little consideration to ‘what best explains’ and offered a list of reasons and an assertion that economic developments were the most important factor. These explanations were often stronger than their judgements.

Question 6

The key element in this question was the importance of the Missouri Compromise; few engaged with this sufficiently to make effective comparisons with other factors which were better known and understood. The question’s wording was specifically about the ‘development’ of slavery; this was not always the focus of answers. There was consideration of economic developments and the growth and production of crops like cotton, which were dependent on slave labour. The resulting expansion was not always appreciated.

Question 7

Most answers attempted to respond to the question rather than offer a general account of Jackson’s presidency. The best answers included debates about whether broader political considerations, such as responding to the demand for greater democracy or preserving the union, were more or less important than the exercise of personal power and the maintenance of personal prestige. Some answers were uncertain about the term ‘personal ambition’. Key elements in the presidency were usually considered but not always in terms of the question. The quality and coherence of arguments were variable.

Question 8

There is a distinction between a general discussion of the causes of the war and a weighing of factors which brought about the deterioration of relations in a given period. Stronger responses focused firmly on the way that the relationship deteriorated, as the issue of slavery in the territories polarised opinions and led to increased violence and fears on both sides. Some responses were more concerned with general differences between North and South, so the deterioration was not addressed adequately. Some answers neglected the role of Lincoln and while slavery was often at the heart of answers, the whole issue of its expansion and the debate about the territories was neglected. Some much stronger responses weighed the different elements.

Question 9

Some candidates effectively used their knowledge about Lincoln's political skills, his choice of leaders and his understanding of the importance of the Border States and his timing of Emancipation. Stronger answers offered a focused analysis and some judgement. Some weaker answers were more akin to answers to a question on why the Union won the Civil War.

Question 11

Most answers explained both the achievements and shortcomings of Reconstruction, some lacked balance. For some, there were no achievements and instead a catalogue of failures. Some seemed over influenced by contemporary Southern criticisms of 'carpet baggers' and some drifted to a general critique of Grant. Some of the strongest answers on this paper were presented on this topic and they offered a sustained, balanced analysis of the different elements in Reconstruction.

Question 14

Many answers showed detailed knowledge of the regulations imposed on big business and of other elements of Roosevelt's domestic policies. Stronger answers offered a judgement and tried to establish criteria for assessing the term 'key achievement' by comparing the impact and effectiveness of the different policies. Though offering some creditable explanations, weaker responses neglected the element of judgement.

Question 16

The question referred to the collapse of the US Stock Market not to the Great Depression generally, and few responses sustained the focus on that. General assessments of the economy in the 1920s did not always make the explicit link to the Crash. Few answers dealt with key elements in the development of an investment 'bubble'; some did analyse the supposed failures of regulation and the role of the banks. There was some sound knowledge but this resulted in uneven answers and reflected some uncertainty about what knowledge was appropriate.

Question 17

The answers tended to fall into two broad categories: one was a list of measures followed by comments on their successes and/or limitations with little developed consideration of objectives; the other was driven more by a definition of objectives and testing the outcomes of the measures against well-established criteria. The latter offered the most effective analysis. In terms of knowledge, there was somewhat patchy treatment of key measures and often a rather unbalanced account of banking reform. There were some perceptive answers which discussed what the objectives were and went beyond a general 'relief, recovery and reform' formula. Some shifted their focus to a conservative critique of state intervention without linking this to the actual objectives. Most answers to this question did show supported judgement.

Question 19

Most answers considered different elements: economic power, leadership, air power and sea power were the most common. There was often quite detailed information about the weaponry produced by US factories and the effects of bombing (though the development of the Atomic Bombs was often omitted). The effect of US economic aid to allies was considered; its impact was rather overestimated in some cases. Sections on leadership were less developed and the contribution of the US army and marines, especially in the Pacific, was neglected. There was judgement, usually that the economic power was the most important element; knowledge was more variable, and some analysis tended to assert.

Question 20

Stronger answers addressed what the US interests in this period were. Many simply looked at the aim of containing communism and judged US policy in these terms. Most offered assessment of the overall success and failure, though some described events. Several important developments got rather cursory treatment, for example, the Berlin Blockade. Most dealt with events in the Far East, but they were less sure what interests were at stake here.

Question 21

Many responses offered an answer more suited to one on Eisenhower's domestic and foreign policy. This was often an unsuccessful approach as the question was not whether Eisenhower did or did not promote prosperity or deal with foreign affairs or civil rights successfully, but about his popularity and the perception of these policies. It is important to respond to the actual question set not adapt previous essays on a different topic. Some answers that tried to deal with Eisenhower's personality did not seem to know much more than he was a successful general.

Question 22

Most answers did respond to the question and considered to whom the measures were aimed at and how far different groups benefited. There were some problems in that different groups such as Black Americans and the poor sometimes overlapped. There was some effective knowledge of leading reforms and some critiques of their impact. The range of measures considered was sometimes rather restricted.

Question 23

Many answers offered a series of factors explaining the US difficulties and failures and the discontent about the war in the US. However, there was not always sufficient focus on the reasons for withdrawal. Stronger answers responded to the wording and demands of the question and offered some perceptive judgements about the actual withdrawal. In weaker responses, the military elements were often the least well explained. There was some critical discussion of the role of protest and criticism at home. This question, more than most, suffered from a tendency to reproduce a list of factors. This list might have been offered for any question about the US failure in Vietnam.

Question 24

Stronger answers were well argued and assessed the relative importance of economic problems in explaining the election result. Many weaker answers saw the result as a question about Carter's presidency, not the election. This led to a 'successes and failures' approach, or in some cases a simple analysis of shortcomings, without reference to the impact on voters or an analysis of the alternative offered by Reagan.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/52
The Crusades 1095–1192

Key messages

- Similarities and differences in **Question 1** need to be analysed rather than described
- A clear judgement on the extent of support/disagreement based on analysis of provenance and evaluation of the documents as historical evidence is needed in **Question 1**
- Analysis of documents in **Question 2** need to be organised into evidence for support for the thesis in the question and evidence against to reach the top levels
- Knowledge should be used to contextualise the documents and assess how convincing they are as evidence rather than simply used to supplement the general arguments
- Candidates should show critical evaluation of all the documents in relation to how convincing their evidence is in supporting/challenging the thesis in the question.

General comments

Question 1

The best answers established a solid foundation of textual analysis before moving on to critical analysis of the documents. These were able to offer an effective discussion relating to the overall messages of the documents regarding their insight towards the enquiry established by the question. Weaker responses tended towards describing the similarities and differences or identifying issues of similarity and difference and then juxtaposing a supporting quotation which is not enough on its own to justify analysis. These responses did not offer broader discussion of the documents' insights for the enquiry which was necessary to access the higher levels. There was some confusion in interpreting the documents, which did sometimes lead to the comparisons being invalid. Some answers treated the documents separately by extended discussions of their content, leaving the comparisons too implicit.

Generally, most answers were well-applied to the question that was set. Some did wander away from the matter under discussion and became unfocused. A minority introduced descriptive sections from own knowledge related to the topic but that were not linked to the documents, which was not rewarded.

Many answers lacked an explicit judgement on the extent to which the documents agreed and disagreed with each other. This can be most effectively achieved in a short conclusion or introduction, but there is no particular requirement where the judgement is placed as long as it is clear to the examiner and supported by the developed logic of the answer.

Most answers gave an attempt to explain similarities and/or differences through references to provenance. These could be improved by the quality of explanation: some analysis was too implicit in that it failed to link this to the comparative judgement or one source was explained more clearly than the other. The issue of when the documents were written was relevant to many answers and this was perhaps not explored as consistently as it could be. The critical evaluation of documents as historical evidence should be related to the comparison. Wider contextual knowledge can be used to show understanding of the authors, their audiences and the issues shaping their authorial agendas, but this does not need discussions on reliability or credibility which are not related to explanations of the differences/similarities. Such analysis became digressive in some answers.

Question 2

The vast majority of answers did not seek to write knowledge-based essays on the topics and primarily focused on the documents. A full analysis of each of these as a set and interpreting them in relation to the question is necessary for the top level. Answers that went through each source sequentially in turn would mostly struggle to achieve this. The most effective responses organised the answer into two arguments, analysing how the documents agree and disagree with the thesis in the question, using cross-reference and organisation of the material. All the documents need to be fully analysed. As with **Question 1**, some answers simply quoted the source and then gave a general explanation about the relationship to the question rather than fully explaining how the content and views of the source itself related to the thesis in the question.

In terms of evaluation, candidates needed a well explained and sustained critical evaluation of the documents that focused precisely on the question of how convincing they were in relation to the thesis contained within it to achieve the top level. This meant that candidates needed to focus on the information contained within the documents, whereas a significant number of answers used their own knowledge as a foundation and the documents were used in a secondary manner. Own knowledge is not explicitly rewarded, though it is obviously needed to place the evidence of the documents into their historical context. The best answers used their knowledge selectively and effectively to discuss the credibility of the information within the documents in relation to the question. Many answers contained extensive knowledge, but this was not used to contextualise the documents. Similarly, some answers just relied on general context to evaluate the documents and did not critically analyse their provenance, such as their nature, origin and purpose, in sufficient depth as part of their attempt to create a clear judgement. Some comments were rather limited, and answers needed to have a range of arguments for each document to allow a coherent and developed judgement to be constructed.

For a coherent and developed judgement to be developed, this would typically require the documents to be analysed as a set.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Question 1 – answers generally contained effective comparisons of Richard’s responses to the difficulties he faced though there was some lack of appreciation of the subtleties of the similarities, in terms of Richard’s pragmatism in the face of opposition within the Christian forces. More could have been made of the time difference in the documents and how that explained the differences.

Question 2

Question 2 – stronger responses offered detailed knowledge of campaigns and many answers had detailed contextual knowledge on Stephen of Blois and the events at Antioch in 1098, in particular. Weaker responses offered some generalised knowledge and demonstrated occasional confusion about which crusade was being discussed. More critical analysis of the documents would have been useful, though there was some good analysis of Ekkehard and the *Gesta Francorum*, though many answers made generalised comments, e.g. about the date of document’s composition, without developing this into a sustained critique or support for its use in the argument.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/53
The Reign of Henry VIII 1509–1547

Key messages

- Similarities and differences in **Question 1** need to be analysed rather than described
- A clear judgement on the extent of support/disagreement based on analysis of provenance and evaluation of the documents as historical evidence is needed in **Question 1**
- Analysis of documents in **Question 2** need to be organised into evidence for support for the thesis in the question and evidence against to reach the top levels
- Knowledge should be used to contextualise the documents and assess how convincing they are as evidence rather than simply used to supplement the general arguments
- Candidates should show critical evaluation of all the documents in relation to how convincing their evidence is in supporting/challenging the thesis in the question.

General comments

Question 1

The best answers established a solid foundation of textual analysis before moving on to critical analysis of the documents. These were able to offer an effective discussion relating to the overall messages of the documents regarding their insight towards the enquiry established by the question. Weaker responses tended towards describing the similarities and differences or identifying issues of similarity and difference and then juxtaposing a supporting quotation which is not enough on its own to justify analysis. These responses did not offer broader discussion of the documents' insights for the enquiry which was necessary to access the higher levels. There was also some confusion in interpreting the documents, which did sometimes lead to the comparisons being invalid. Some answers treated the documents separately by extended discussions of their content, leaving the comparisons too implicit.

Generally, most answers were well-applied to the question that was set. Some did wander away from the matter under discussion and became unfocused. A minority introduced descriptive sections from own knowledge related to the topic but that were not linked to the documents, which was not rewarded.

Many answers lacked an explicit judgement on the extent to which the documents agreed and disagreed with each other. This can be most effectively achieved in a short conclusion or introduction, but there is no particular requirement where the judgement is placed as long as it is clear to the examiner and supported by the developed logic of the answer.

Most answers gave an attempt to explain similarities and/or differences through references to provenance. These could be improved by the quality of explanation: some analysis was too implicit in that it failed to link this to the comparative judgement, or one source was explained more clearly than the other. The issue of when the documents were written was relevant to many answers and this was perhaps not explored as consistently as it could be. The critical evaluation of documents as historical evidence should be related to the comparison. Wider contextual knowledge can be used to show understanding of the authors, their audiences and the issues shaping their authorial agendas, but this does not need discussions on reliability or credibility which are not related to explanations of the differences/similarities. Such analysis became digressive in some answers.

Question 2

The vast majority of answers did not seek to write knowledge-based essays on the topics and primarily focused on the documents. A full analysis of each of these as a set and interpreting them in relation to the question is necessary for the top level. Answers that went through each source sequentially in turn would mostly struggle to achieve this. The most effective responses organised the answer into two arguments, analysing how the documents agree and disagree with the thesis in the question, using cross-reference and organisation of the material. All the documents need to be fully analysed. As with **Question 1**, some answers simply quoted the source and then gave a general explanation about the relationship to the question rather than fully explaining how the content and views of the source itself related to the thesis in the question.

In terms of evaluation, candidates needed a well explained and sustained critical evaluation of the documents that focused precisely on the question of how convincing they were in relation to the thesis contained within it to achieve the top level. This meant that candidates needed to focus on the information contained within the documents, whereas a significant number of answers used their own knowledge as a foundation and the documents were used in a secondary manner. Own knowledge is not explicitly rewarded, though it is obviously needed to place the evidence of the documents into their historical context. The best answers used their knowledge selectively and effectively to discuss the credibility of the information within the documents in relation to the question. Many answers contained extensive knowledge, but this was not used to contextualise the documents. Similarly, some answers just relied on general context to evaluate the documents and did not critically analyse their provenance, such as their nature, origin and purpose, in sufficient depth as part of their attempt to create a clear judgement. Some comments were rather limited, and answers needed to have a range of arguments for each document to allow a coherent and developed judgement to be constructed.

For a coherent and developed judgement to be developed, this would typically require the documents to be analysed as a set.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Question 1 – the answers generally handled the common views of Thomas More on the supremacy and the differences in tone, but there was also some confusion in understanding the documents and some answers lost focus on the question. There was also a tendency to not give a clear judgment on the extent to which the documents agreed/disagreed.

Question 2

Question 2 – answers attempted to interpret the documents relatively well with some attempt to evaluate them critically and place them within context, though some answers focused more on existing knowledge. Some answers struggled to interpret what documents C, D and F were trying to say and there was some confusion over what Protestants actually believed which led to some confusion when interpreting D in particular and why these men were being condemned as heretics.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/55
The Reign of Charles I 1625–1649

There were too few candidates for a meaningful report to be produced.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/56
The French Revolution 1774–1794

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Question 2

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Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Question 1 – the treatment of the different cahiers' views on taxation and the constitution was effective but few answers included any discussion of the impact of the Enlightenment on the nobility as a cause of their liberal sentiments.

Question 2

Question 2 – there was good coverage of reasons for Robespierre's fall, though most answers did not fully engage with the extent to which this was his own responsibility as opposed to factors outside his control. Some answers were not always explicit about the economic arguments in D and there was some confusion about the Cult of the Supreme Being in E. There was some impressively detailed knowledge of Robespierre's behaviour in the days prior to his overthrow, linked to F, and overall, an extensive grasp of the contextual points.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/58
Russia in Revolution 1905–1924

Key messages

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General comments

Question 1

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Question 2

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Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Question 1 – most responses offered effective comparisons of the differing perspectives on 1905, with many getting the different tone and perception of motive. Some responses went slightly off at a tangent by focusing on Fr Gapon, who is only a marginal figure in source A and his appearance in B is more related to the broader point that Bloody Sunday was due to incompetence on the part of the authorities rather than part of a malevolent plot as Lenin describes it. Some responses correctly captured the reasons for the differences though not many linked Lenin's positive portrayal directly to his aims and objectives in 1917. Remarks as to the US perspective tended to be generalised about anti-Communism rather than the role of diplomatic reports.

Question 2

Question 2 – Most of the documents were understood correctly, though the Stalin source did not see many answers suggest that his emphasis on the weaknesses of the PG might be from a desire not to give his rival, Trotsky, the credit; more attention might also have been given to why Trotsky emphasised his own role. There was good cross referencing with Lenin's call to arms at times, though some answers failed to fully understand the point that source E was making about Lenin's decisiveness in seizing power, instead focusing on how popular the Bolsheviks were. Good use was made of source C's evidence on the problems faced by the Provisional Government when it came to power, but given this was written in May 1917, too much attention was given to the events from June to October which were not what the document was focusing on. Many answers showed good factual knowledge, but sometimes this was used to develop broader arguments rather than focus on assessing the persuasiveness of the evidence from the documents.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/59
Nazi Germany 1933–1945

Key messages

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Question 2

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For a coherent and developed judgement to be developed, this would typically require the documents to be analysed as a set.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Question 1 – most responses were very effective, with the main similarities and differences identified and a clear sense of a reason for difference being the move towards autarky and the differing contexts of the audiences being addressed. Weaker answers got the common theme of war-readiness or focused on unemployment but did not embellish on this.

Question 2

Question 2 – there was generally a clear sense of how the documents divided up here, with frequent reference to Goebbels's motives in C and what D represents as an example of propaganda being forced onto the population. Most answers assessed the dates of these documents in the context of the early years of Nazi Germany, though some did not distinguish between Goebbels' intentions and reality. Documents E and F were used generally to make the case against the effectiveness of Nazi propaganda. E could have had more of its nuances highlighted, in that it is as much evidence for the success and failures, but much depends on how far SOPADE reports represent wishful thinking or accurate reportages. Candidates do not need to give generalised comments on documents written by historians but should assess its validity from their wider knowledge in terms of how convincing their argument is. Overall, there was a good dissection of the relevance of the documents seen in most scripts.

HISTORY

<p>Paper 9769/06 Personal Investigation</p>

Key messages

- Be aware of the requirements and implications of the questions
- Engage in genuine, not manufactured, discussion
- Be aware of the skills which the Personal Investigations require in the handling of knowledge

General comments

The range of work seen

Many effective responses were coherent, well-structured and discussed a variety of arguments in an analytical fashion. The questions selected were sufficiently controversial to invite a sustained discussion. They were usually, but not always, well written with a clear, convincing thesis, often the result of quite wide reading. There were many footnotes and extensive bibliographies. Some investigations were impressive, and acutely analytical so exhausted all the avenues of the arguments. Strong answers engaged with the concepts inherent in the question and offered careful definition of the terms of the discussion. Even when the question was apparently straightforward, for example, 'How great a ruler was Alfred the Great?', stronger essays considered the concept of greatness in terms of the rulers of the time and established criteria for judgement, instead of making Alfred's deeds the starting point and then trying to establish whether they were 'great'.

Where explanation rather than sustained judgement was the predominant characteristic and the investigations relied either on an explained list of factors, or the demonstration of a viewpoint which did not include much balance or consideration of alternatives, there was often some well-researched knowledge. However, the critical sense shown was much less developed than in the more effective responses.

Less successful answers often did not respond to the demands and implications of their own questions. By the way their questions were formulated, they seemed more concerned with the general topic than the specific issues raised. In some cases, the structure lacked coherence and paragraphs seemed to be independent of each other. There was little flow, no clear argument and sometimes inaccurate expression. Some attempted to respond to the question, but the uneven focus and support resulted in answers which were unconvincing.

Most answers did show that candidates had undertaken relevant personal research and produced worthwhile independent work. There were a few investigations with limited answers that did not respond to the question or offer much of relevance or factual accuracy. The comments on aspects of the work seen should be seen in this context and are intended to support not to denigrate what was often clearly a considerable personal achievement.

Choice of question

Most questions were capable of leading learners to a sustained discussion but, in practice, some turned out to be problematic: this was because the implications were not fully grasped, and the requirements not met. It would be possible to sustain a discussion about how far Nicholas II was responsible for the fall of Tsardom or how far Louis XVI was responsible for the French Revolution; the focus of this sort of investigation should be the actual event in the question. Without this, investigations became a general survey of problems and weaknesses of the monarchs and their reigns. Some investigations made little or no reference to the events of 1917 or 1789. The downfall of Napoleon was similarly deficient in consideration of the circumstances of his fall, and questions on the US withdrawal from Vietnam lacked consideration of the actual withdrawal as opposed to events much earlier in the conflict. Thus, while there were few obviously flawed formulations which asked for description or merely explanation, for example, 'Why did the Liberals pass reforms, 1908-1914?',

there were questions which were perhaps unsuitable for the approach envisaged by the candidates. 'How far was Edward the Confessor responsible for the Norman Conquest?' was an example. He might have been responsible for the succession crisis, but William's victory and conquest is another matter. There were also questions which did not allow for a great deal of discussion because the counter-arguments were hard to establish, for example, 'How successful was the Pilgrimage of Grace?'

Judgements

Many questions took a common Pre-U examination formulation and asked 'What best explains...' or took one element and asked if it were the main factor or sometimes, less logically, 'to what extent' it was the main factor, even though absolutes like 'main' cannot be qualified. Though offering the chance of a clear structure in which different factors can be considered, this was something of a 'false friend' as it led to a series of explained factors rather than sustained evaluation. Unless there are compelling arguments in a candidate's mind about the relative importance of one element compared with other elements, this sort of question can restrict the deployment of higher-level analysis. The outcome of elections suffered from listing reasons as did the outcome of the Vietnam War.

In the best responses the choice of topic was clearly guided by initial research which revealed credible alternatives capable of being evaluated. Weaker responses attempted to construct an argument against an accepted interpretation that was non-viable and therefore wholly unconvincing. There were some strained and unconvincing alternative perspectives which could be supported by very little primary or secondary evidence. In a discussion of Hitler's responsibility for the Holocaust, for example, a discussion of whether he really believed in anti-Semitism or adopted it as a vote winner, could not be justified by evidence from the 1920s and seemed contrived. Investigations must be led by the availability of appropriate evidence.

In an extended piece of historical analysis, the exercise of judgement is important and consistency of judgement equally so; the best responses managed this well. In weaker responses, it was not unusual for the thrust of an investigation to be going to suggest a conclusion only for a U-turn to be made in the final section. Thus, while economic factors had been consistently seen as more important to German Unification than other elements, military or diplomatic, the expected overall conclusion did not materialise, instead Bismarck's diplomacy was seen as the key. Interim judgements about disputed elements can help to avoid this and allow candidates to maintain control of what are often complex arguments which develop as more reading is undertaken. It also avoids confusing juxtapositions: for example, where in one paragraph Mussolini's economic policies are seen as successful and then in the next are seen as his greatest failure. A judgement which synthesises or offers a summary evaluation of different viewpoints can avoid this 'ping-pong' approach.

Evidence

Good responses gave strong evaluations of both primary and secondary material, particularly in answers to topics where interpretation of evidence was key. In general there was more evaluation of overall interpretations than of specific evidence. There was relatively little *ad hominem* evaluation of historians or reliance on general comments on schools of thought. Historians were used with some critical sense, and in some topics, there was reference to more recent writings. However, some older works were used even though there is now little consensus that their views are tenable. In the digital age, it is natural that web-based resources will be used and the wealth of primary material available might have been used more in investigations outside the medieval period. Care should be taken that secondary material is appropriate for what should be an academic exercise with credible sources.

Key terms

Independent study can bring problems in understanding key terms and concepts which can undermine arguments and vitiate judgements. An obvious example is the confusion of 'economic' and 'financial' so often seen in treatments of the Ancien Regime in the French Revolution. Concerns about food shortages, employment, prices, harvests, and rents might have brought French people onto the streets, but concern about the deficit unless by very well informed and fiscally responsible people, generally did not. The deficit did not produce starvation.

There is also the use of the word 'peasant' to mean 'lower class person' as in accounts of 'peasants' going on strike and milling in the streets of Petrograd in 1917. The old confusion of 'government' and 'parliament' persists and uncertainty about foreign policy and imperial policy, or domestic and foreign matters, led to irrelevance in some cases.

Key Skills

The evaluation of evidence and the critical assessment of interpretations, the development of supported judgements, the effective assessment of relative importance of different factors, clear and concise writing, and correct referencing, are skills which need to be learnt in extended historical writing.

HISTORY

Paper 9769/72
The Civil Rights Movement in the USA
1954–1968

Key messages

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Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Question 1 – most responses were effective at identifying the similarities and differences of Malcolm X's appeal, but a few answers moved away from the question or brought in wider knowledge which obscured the points the documents were making. There was lots of focus on differing perceptions of Malcolm X based on geography but fewer insights into the temporal difference between the two documents and the contrast between the local and the national pictures.

Question 2

Question 2 – most responses showed understanding of these documents with some insights into wider context though explicit focus on the significance of dates was often slight and the best answers were much clearer about change over time in terms of the effectiveness of peaceful protest. The documents which were more in the middle of the debate (e.g. E) were not always as effectively dealt with. Some answers ended up describing broad contextual knowledge about Black Power for instance without relating it to the validity of E and F.