

Moderators' Report/
Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2015

Pearson Edexcel GCE
in History (6HI04) Paper 01

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This Report is, by its very nature, a general report derived from the experiences of the moderating team this summer. Centres are reminded that every centre has its own individual report written by the person who moderated their coursework. This can be accessed via www.edexcelonline.co.uk and all examination officers in schools and colleges will have the necessary login and password details. These individual reports should be read in conjunction with this Report, which necessarily gives the wider picture.

It was found that some centres had either not accessed their previous reports, or had not acted on the advice they contained. Where such centres have had their marks regressed, they will continue to disadvantage their students until advice in these centre-specific reports has been actioned.

Introduction

This is the sixth June entry for Unit 4, Historical Enquiry, which is the coursework component of GCE History and this summer saw an entry of over 20,000 candidates. Two enquiries were researched by the candidates: one focused in depth on the short-term significance of an individual, event, movement or factor, the second being a breadth study focusing on the process of change over time across a period of at least 100 years. Together, the two enquiries made up a single assignment. These assignments were marked by the centres' teachers, and a sample from each centre was submitted for external moderation in order to align standards. Moderation was carried out by six teams of moderators, working under the guidance of their team leaders who were, in turn, working to the principal moderator who was responsible for the overall conduct of the moderation process.

It is important to appreciate that moderation is not a re-marking of the coursework. It is, rather, an appraisal of the centre's marking against national standards and, if necessary, involves the recommendation of an adjustment. The sample submitted is taken as indicative of the standard of marking of the whole, and so any adjustment applies to the work of the whole cohort. Of the centres sampled and moderated, only about 10% had a recommendation made to Edexcel for adjustments to be made to their marks in order to align them with national standards. All centres are provided with a centre-specific report on their candidates' performance and quality of their assessments, and it was pleasing to note the close attention that the majority of centres had paid to the advice given in previous years. However, it was disappointing to note that a small minority of centres were disregarding the advice given in their previous E9 reports, to the continuing disadvantage of their students.

Overall, moderators, as in previous years, found much to interest and impress, not only in the candidates' work but also in the ways in which their teachers had prepared and mentored their students, and in the careful application of the published mark schemes.

Administration

Most centres completed all aspects of the administration of this Unit very well, with their candidates' work clearly presented, and all necessary documentation accompanying the submission. Centres are reminded that a checklist of what to send to the moderator can be found on Edexcel's website. Centres in any doubt as to what should be sent are urged to access this.

- **Individual Candidate Assessment sheets**

Even more centres than previously are failing to check these before sending the sample to their moderator. There have been instances where the candidate number has been omitted or, even more problematical, the wrong candidate number has been inserted. Some candidates have failed to sign their sheets and, more worryingly, the centre assessor has failed to add his/her signature. In these cases, the work has to be returned to the centres concerned, as both

student and teacher signatures are needed in order to authenticate the assignments as the candidates' own work.

All candidates are required to write their Part A and Part B enquiry titles in the appropriate spaces on their ICA sheets. Moderators noted instances where there was a mis-match between the title on the ICA sheets and the actual enquiry that had been followed when the coursework was read.

A larger number of candidates than in previous years failed to enter their total word count of their ICA sheets. Not only did it build in a delay whilst the moderator checked that the word limit had not been exceeded, but it also disregards the statement immediately below, signed by the candidate, part of which states '*I also declare that the word count given above is correct. I am aware of the penalties that will be imposed by exceeding the word limit (4000 words) by any amount.*'

These errors and omissions build an unnecessary delay into the moderation process.

- **OPTEMS forms**

Moderators reported fewer transcription errors than in the past. Where the mark on the OPTEMS form did not match that on a student's work, this was generally where internal standardisation had resulted in a mark adjustment and the mark on the OPTEMS form had not been changed. Where discrepancies like this occur, the centre has to be contacted because only they can change the centre-submitted students' marks.

There were a small number of instances where all copies of the OPTEMS form were sent to the moderator. It is clearly stated on the form that the top copy has to be sent to Edexcel (this is so that the centre marks for each Candidate can be recorded in the system) and that one copy must be retained by the centre. Only the yellow copy should be sent to the moderator.

- **Photocopies of the coursework programme**

An increasing percentage of centres are failing to include, as required, a photocopy of the coursework programme their students are following. This needs to be done even if a centre is following an Edexcel-designed programme, and is particularly important where a centre is following a programme they have designed themselves. The moderator needs to know that all such programmes have been approved by Edexcel before moderation can proceed. Centres are reminded that it is their responsibility to retain a copy of the approval form.

- **Highest and lowest scoring candidates**

Whilst it seems only necessary to send the sample of work as indicated on the OPTEMS form, centres are reminded that if this sample does not contain the work of the highest and lowest scoring

candidates, then these must also be sent to the moderator. This is made clear on the top copy of the OPTEMS form. Where a centre has submitted work on more than one coursework programme it is not necessary to send the highest and lowest scoring work from each programme. The centre's submission is regarded as a submission by a single cohort, no matter how many coursework programmes are followed, and so only the overall highest and lowest scoring candidates' work should be sent.

- **Word limits**

The vast majority of candidates are now writing within the limit of 4,000 words. Centres are reminded that the limit of 4,000 words is an absolute. Where a candidate does exceed the limit of 4,000 words, it is entirely permissible to return the work to the student concerned for editing. If this is not possible, marking must stop once 4,000 words have been read. This should be easy to calculate, as candidates are required to insert a cumulative word count across the whole assignment. This is a Specification requirement: the word count must be cumulative across the whole assignment, starting with the first page of Part A and ending with the last page of Part B, no matter in which order the student has completed the two parts of the assignment. There were some centres where the teacher/marker had noted that the word count had been exceeded, but this was then not addressed when assessing the work. Furthermore, a small minority of centres, noting word limits had been exceeded, took the relevant candidates down a level. This is not the correct course of action to take.

- **Resource record sheets**

The use of resource records has undoubtedly improved. Moderators report that many resource records were detailed, demonstrating an impressive range of research and were appropriately monitored by centres. There were, however, a worryingly large number of centres where the teacher concerned had simply 'signed off' the resource records via a tick and a single date and initials at the end.

Centres are again reminded that resource record sheets exist for a specific purpose, and their completion is a Specification requirement. They serve, not only to validate the students' enquiries as being their own work, but also to validate teacher judgements on their students' source work. Thus, as students access a resource they should note the resource and comment briefly, in their resource record, on its usefulness for their field of research. They should initial and date the entry. The teachers should access these resource records at regular intervals and date and initial this access. Not to do this means that part of the essential validation process has not been completed.

Beyond validation, regular access to students' resource records as their research progresses, means that the teachers concerned can guide the students in accessing appropriate source material. In this way the resource records can be used as a mentoring tool and as a focus point for mentoring sessions. It was clear, from the entries on

the resource records, that some teachers appreciated this – and to the benefit of their students. It is perfectly acceptable for centres to devise their own resource records, but they must carry the same information as the Edexcel-designed one.

More centres than in previous years are permitting their candidates to word process their resource records, entering the relevant information as they access different resources. This is perfectly acceptable, but does not mean that the teacher's access to these word-processed records is excused. They must be validated as the handwritten resource records are validated.

A small minority of centres are using the resource records only to note the actual contemporary sources used in Part A. This is not acceptable. The resource records must note all sources and resources accessed by the student in pursuit of both their Part A and Part B enquiries. It was concerning to note that an increasing number of students are submitting bibliographies, particularly in respect of their Part B enquiries, that do not match the books listed on their resource records.

- **Submission date**

Centres are reminded that the date for the submission of coursework to their moderator is always 15th May. This is a date agreed by all the Awarding Bodies. Centres are reminded that this is the date the work should be received, not the date by which it should be sent. Some centres are still persisting in regarding the date as being roughly approximate and are sending in work up to a fortnight late. This creates unnecessary work for moderators and for Edexcel, and delays moderation.

Design of Enquiries

The majority of candidates followed enquiries that were appropriate for the demands of the Unit. There were, however, an increasing number of instances where the enquiries strayed from the focus of the coursework programme being followed, or failed to address the specific targets of the two components. The Edexcel publication 'Getting Started' provides a large number of enquiry titles in exemplification of a range of approaches, and centres are urged to use the provided question stems. Centres are reminded that it is their responsibility to approve the enquiry titles selected by their students; if they are in any doubt, advice can always be sought via Edexcel's 'Ask the Expert' service.

Part A of the assignment

Centres adopted three main approaches to the Part A enquiries, all of which are acceptable to Edexcel. They either

- (i) set the same enquiry for all their students, or
- (ii) allowed students to select their enquiries from a limited range provided by the centre, or
- (iii) allowed their students the freedom to set their own enquiries.

The following points should be noted:

- Moderators reported a further increase in the type of enquiries that, in their execution, were not appropriately focused on the analysis and evaluation of short-term significance. For example, questions using the stem 'To what extent ...' usually ended with a response comparing factors bringing about change, which is more appropriate for a Part B enquiry. Part A enquiries must seek to ask (and answer) "What did it bring about?" "What difference did it make?" and nothing more.
- Some enquiry titles still lacked a specific enough focus and this was reflected in the candidates' work. It is most strongly suggested that centres require students to insert dates into their enquiry titles, as this would help focus their selection of material. The time span for 'short-term significance' has been defined by Edexcel as being not more than 20% of the extent of the coursework programme (which would usually be twenty years) but can be, and in many cases, should be, considerably less.
- Experience has shown that candidates tend to do best when they are permitted the freedom to devise their own Part A enquiries and in so doing, follow their own interests.

Part B of the assignment

Most centres set the same Part B enquiry to all their students. They generally followed the published enquiry stems and focused securely on change over time in two main ways.

The following points should be noted:

- Many enquiries select a particular factor as being the main driver behind the process of change and compare this, through explanation and analysis, with other potential factors that could be seen to drive change. Such enquiries have a causal focus, concentrating on the factors that brought about change and deciding on their relative significance. The main problem experienced by candidates following this approach arose, as in previous years, where the role of individuals had been selected as the stated factor. There are still some candidates who present mini-biographies of a range of relevant individuals. Such candidates fail to appreciate that the 'role of individuals' is a factor to be compared to alternative factors in driving the process of change. Thus the candidates should construct an argument for the 'role of individuals' being central to change, bringing in specific individuals insofar as they exemplify the points being made.
- Many enquiries selected a specific event as a turning point and, by going through a similar process of comparison with other potential turning points, reach a balanced and supported judgement as to

which was key. Such enquiries focus on patterns of change by highlighting key moments of change and continuity across the period and deciding on their relative significance. Where centres and their students experienced problems with this approach, it was with a lack of explicit focus on patterns of change and/or with lack of a demonstrable understanding of the definition of a turning point.

- Moderators noted an increase in the number of candidates writing very brief conclusions, simply asserting that the stated factor or turning point was the key to change. The concluding paragraph(s) should draw together the threads of the argument being made, and reached a substantiated conclusion.

Candidate performance

Many candidates produced work of a high quality: the best was really impressive and even the weakest had demonstrated some understanding and had engaged in some research, no matter how limited.

The following points should be noted:

Footnotes

More candidates than in previous years are making effective use of footnotes in both Part A and Part B of their assignments. However, some centres are using footnotes to develop the argument being made in the body of the enquiry and / or to introduce additional information. This is expressly forbidden:

*Footnotes should **not** be used to provide more information, or to develop points and arguments made in the text. Footnotes will not contribute directly to assessment and should not be used to make points central to the argument.*

(Getting Started page 63)

Thus for a centre to note perceived levels and marks beside footnotes is not permissible, neither is it permissible for a centre to encourage students to develop footnotes in this way.

Part A of the assignment

- Many candidates are now focusing sharply on their analysis of short-term significance of their specified factor, movement, individual or event as well as engaging with a range of contemporary source material. An increasing number of candidates are including, in appendices, the source material they have used. Whilst not a Specification requirement, it is greatly appreciated by moderators, particularly where art work or obscure sources are used. Similarly, where centres issue a source booklet to all students, it is extremely helpful to have that booklet enclosed with the submission, as many centres are now doing. Centres are reminded that, where such a booklet/resource bank is produced, it must contain a sufficient

number of relevant sources to enable candidates to make a genuine selection.

- There was, again, a disappointing increase in candidates selecting a considerable number of sources and simply slipping extracts from them, often no more than a sentence or two, into their response at appropriate points. A combination of the word limit and the number of sources selected, precluded any effective source interrogation and evaluation. Centres are reminded that Edexcel recommends the use and evaluation of between four and six contemporary sources, as this has been found to be the optimum number of sources to enable effective interrogation and evaluation.
- Candidates are still finding troublesome the weighing of evidence as to its status in contributing to the formation of judgements. Although more candidates are attempting to do this, their approach tends to be somewhat mechanistic and most end up asserting the validity and reliability of one source over another.

Part B of the assignment

- More candidates than in previous sessions demonstrated a good understanding of the process of change over time. There was some excellent analysis of a range of factors involved in the process of change, and candidates opting for the 'turning point' approach demonstrated a greater understanding of the nature and concept of a turning point, focusing successfully on change and continuity over time.
- Many more candidates than in previous sessions were clearly accessing a range of books and articles, and put this to good effect when researching for their enquiries. This was shown by an impressive use of footnotes and extensive bibliographies as evidence of their wider reading.
- Centres setting the same Part B assignment to all their students will have all the students researching the same stated turning point or the same stated factor. However, it was surprising to find that, in many centres, the students went on to explore the same alternative turning points or alternative factors. These were usually tackled in the same order, too. In a Unit intended to encourage independent research, this was disturbing. Such centres are reminded that the provision of writing frames is expressly forbidden by the Specification. The Specification states (p.68) that it is '*not legitimate to supply detailed question-specific writing frames or other structures to support an answer*'.
- There was an increasing tendency for candidates, usually from the same centres, to focus only on the stated factor or only on the stated turning point. Such enquiries do not regard the stated factor to be analysed and compared to alternative factors responsible for driving

change, neither do they permit patterns of change to be determined by comparing an analysis of the stated turning point with others. This approach almost inevitably resulted in a chronologically unbalanced response that could not access the higher levels of the mark scheme.

- An increasing number of candidates are not addressing the process of change over the whole extent of the coursework programme. This often occurred when undue focus was placed on the stated factor or turning point, and only cursory attention was paid to either the beginning of the period, or the end. Centres are reminded that a Part B enquiry must span the whole timeframe of the coursework programme. This ruling applies, no matter how long the timeframe. It is not acceptable simply to pick any period of 100 years and research that. Centres finding the timeframe of their selected programme too long are encouraged to submit their own centre-designed one with a more limited range.
- A significant minority of candidates adopting the turning point approach selected a turning point close to the beginning or end of the time frame of their coursework programme. Turning point approaches are intended to enable the students to determine patterns of change and continuity across the time frame. Too early, or too late, and this cannot be done effectively.

Centre Assessment

- **Annotation**
Centre annotations and summary comments are generally remaining detailed with most using the language of the mark schemes. However, moderators noted an increase in centres only making cursory annotations that could not be related with any confidence to the summative comments.
- **Internal standardisation**
It is a Specification requirement (see page 69) that centres must ensure full and effective internal standardisation of assessments made by different teachers and of different teaching groups within a centre. Such centres must operate a system of internal standardisation, so that the marks submitted from the entire cohort are displaying a consistent standard and an agreed overall order of merit is established for all students. Where internal standardisation occurs, it is essential that this is made clear on the candidates' work. Any changes made to the marks as a result of internal standardisation should be explained. Too frequently a change was made to the original mark without any explanation. Many larger centres submitted details of the ways in which they undertook internal moderation, usually enclosing the instructions given to the staff involved, and this was appreciated.

Assessment of AO1

- Centres experienced few difficulties in applying the AO1 mark schemes. Generally, the AO1 assessment of the Part A enquiries was accurate. Some centres, however, are still overly generous at the Level 4/Level 5 boundary when assessing the Part B enquiries. Centres are reminded that marks within Level 5 should only be given for sustained analysis which directly explores the process of change, demonstrating an explicit understanding of the issues raised by the enquiry, evaluating arguments and, where appropriate, interpretations.
- Some centres over-rewarded material that, whilst relevant, lacked depth of understanding, clarity of expression and range of supporting material to justify the mark awarded. The impact of this tended to apply to the better candidates from weaker cohorts. Thus L5 was being awarded rather than high level 4 for AO1 Part B.
- There is a growing tendency for centres to use the low level mark band within a specific level for work that displays the qualities of that level but which is less convincing in its range and/or depth. Centres are reminded that this may only be used for work where, additionally, the quality of written communication does not conform. This was particularly marked with Level 5 assessments, where marks of 21 and 22 were regularly given for work that, whilst being less convincing in range or depth, was nevertheless well-written.

Assessment of AO2

- Some centres are still misapplying the AO2 mark scheme. Too often marks were given at Levels 3 and 4 where there was little or no interrogation or evaluation of the source material, and no weight given to the status of the evidence so derived when reaching a judgement.
- Moderators frequently found that candidates inserting a sentence or two from an appropriate source at an appropriate point in their enquiry were rewarded at high levels, where there was no interrogation of the sources or evaluation of the evidence because none was derived. Such approaches are likely to meet only the Level 2 criteria.
- Moderators reported an increase in the numbers of candidates who were not considering the nature, origin and purpose of the source material they had selected, and so an evaluation of the evidence so derived was cursory, lacking in depth and sophistication.
- Some centres are still rewarding the use of secondary sources by applying the AO2 mark schemes. Where secondary sources are used, for example, in support or challenge of judgements reached from an evaluation of contemporary source material, their use may only be rewarded using the AO1 criteria.

Conclusion

Centres in any doubt about any aspects of this particular unit are urged to familiarise themselves, not only with the Principal Moderator's reports and their own centre reports, but also with the GCE History Specification, Edexcel's publication 'Getting Started' and with the advice and guidance provided on Edexcel's website. An Edexcel service that many teachers have found very helpful is 'Ask the Expert', where any coursework query comes straight through to the principal moderator.

Most centres are to be congratulated on successfully continuing with the development of the coursework unit and to working with the moderating team in ensuring effective, perceptive and accurate assessment of their students' coursework. Where there are problems, these are generally confined to a small number of centres, who are urged, in the interests of their candidates, to implement the recommendations in this report, and in their own E9 reports.

