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Examiners' Report June 2010

GCSE History Controlled Assessment 5HA04 01

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General Comments

- Just fewer than 50 centres submitted Controlled Assessment work at the first opportunity to do so for this unit.
- In real terms, that is a relatively small number compared to the number of centres that entered their candidates for unit exams in the January and June opportunities that were available.
- Controlled Assessment is very different from previous coursework tasks and clearly centres, teachers, students and moderators have to apply a new set of skills in line with the requirements of the new specification.
- It was encouraging to observe that centres, teachers and students had embraced the requirements of the new specification and, on the whole, applied these requirements with professionalism and as intended. The new, and very different elements of the Controlled Assessment appear to have provided students with new and exciting opportunities to demonstrate their historical knowledge and understanding.
- Indeed, the moderating team, all of whom are experienced moderators, also had to acquire new skills in light of the requirements. During April a team of experienced moderators conducted a marking exercise with Controlled Assessment material supplied by a centre. This provided an invaluable opportunity to see how the new specification worked and the issues it posed centres, teachers and students.
- As the Controlled Assessment tasks are still 'live', and many centres have yet to complete this unit it will not be possible to include specific examples, but some of the issues raised by the moderation process will be further commented upon and addressed in this report.

Administration

- The purpose of moderation is to validate the assessment that has been carried out by the centre. In order for this to happen it is important that the administrative tasks expected of the centre, and outlined in the specification, are strictly adhered to.
- As with previous coursework requirements it is important that the OPTEMS is clearly and accurately completed, and the yellow copy submitted with the sample requested to the moderator.
- The highest and lowest scoring candidates must be submitted with the sample.
- Candidates work must be accompanied by an 'Authentication sheet' that has been signed by the candidate, and a breakdown of marks sheet that also indicates the units covered.
- A copy of the specific Controlled Assessment task must be included with the sampled work.
- Many centres submitted brief information about how the different parts of the Controlled Assessment had been undertaken and moderators noted how this was helpful to the moderation process.
- To help the moderation process many centres packaged their sample in score order, and clearly indicated who the highest and lowest scoring candidates were. Also, work was carefully ordered and securely fastened.

- The best examples of evidence of marking saw brief comments related to the generic mark scheme added to candidates work with levels and marks awarded.

Controlled Assessment Tasks

- In the limited entry the most popular topics were Vietnam (CA5), USA 1919-41 (CA3), Government and protest in the USA 1945-70 (CA6), Crime, policing and punishment in England c1880-1990 (CA8), and The impact of war on Britain c1914-1950 (CA10).

Part A: Carry out a historical enquiry

- Moderators reported how well this task had been approached by teachers and students.
- The enquiry options that are available within each CA task clearly allowed some flexibility and either teachers decided the focus for the cohort or students were allowed to choose the precise focus themselves. Either way is valid.
- The enquiry task clearly allowed students across the ability range to demonstrate what they had researched, and write up under controlled conditions.
- Moderators noted the importance of the plan to this part of the task - these came in various forms and must conform to the guidance given in the specification. Clearly students who saw the plan as an opportunity to list the information they had gathered wrote descriptive answers that confined them to Level 2 of the mark scheme. However, those that saw the plan as an opportunity to organise their research information in relation to the specific enquiry question wrote answers that were shaped by the enquiry focus and were able to analyse and make judgements - requirements for Level 3 and Level 4 marks.
- It is important that at all levels students use a range and variety of sources from which they have gathered information. Again, those operating at the higher levels were able to select more precisely from the range of sources the information that was most pertinent to the enquiry.

Part Bi: Compare representations of history

- Moderators noted here that this part was the one most inconsistently marked.
- It is important to note that while this part has elements of cross-referencing, those students that confine their comparison to the content of the representations limit themselves to a maximum Level 2 mark.
- To access Level 3 the student has to analyse the representations and compare how similar and/or different they are. Those that did this considered the

focus of the representation or the emphasis of the representation and then made judgements about the representations.

Part Bii: Analyse and evaluate representations of history

- Moderators noted that the selection by the centre of Representation 3 is of great significance here. It is important to note that it is not simply a source - it must be a representation - it has a slant, particular focus, emphasis etc.
- Centres are encouraged to consider using the representations that have been put in the support material which can be accessed through Edexcel online, or submit their representation 3 to Ask the Expert.
- It is important to follow the guidance given in the generic mark scheme for this part. Analysing the representations so that students can make judgements about the one they think is the best requires the application of certain criteria. Many students were able to do this, though some did it very mechanistically - however, this meant that they were accessing Level 2. To access the higher levels it is necessary to use some contextual knowledge about the topic/period in order to aid their judgement.
- Moderators noted that some students were put into the Level 3/4 mark bands but had not supported their judgements with some contextual knowledge.

Grade Boundaries

Grade	Max Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Raw mark boundary	50	43	38	33	29	25	21	18	15	0
Uniform mark scale boundary	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	0

A* is only used in conversion from raw to uniform marks. It is not a published unit grade.

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