

Moderators' Report/
Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2013

History GCSE Controlled Assessment
5HA04 & 5HB04

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General comments

Work from approximately 35,000 students, was moderated this summer. The most popular CA choices were CA5, CA6 and CA8. Many centres also did CA9 and CA10. Of the rest CA1, CA2, CA3 and CA10 were also chosen. As with 2012, CA7, CA12 and CA13 were done by relatively few centres. Regardless of which CA was chosen Moderators were pleased to note that lessons learnt from 2011 (when there were over 1200 centres submitting) had been applied by many centres, and clearly many centres had taken on board the advice that was given in the 2012 PM Report, Moderator Reports and subsequent training opportunities that had been provided by Edexcel.

The efforts made by the teachers involved to implement the requirements of this unit, prepare students appropriately within the required high level of controlled conditions, and to apply accurately and consistently the generic mark scheme, were greatly appreciated by the moderating team. The work of many candidates demonstrated a genuine effort to engage with the demands of this unit, and suggested that when candidates are given the opportunity to research genuine historical questions and make personal judgements about how the past is represented, they rise to the task and produce interesting and original work.

The administration and presentation of the work was usually thorough and diligent with many centres organising the sample in numerical order with highest and lowest candidates clearly identified. Many centres had clearly internally moderated the work and made this very explicit on either candidates work or on spread sheets. All of this assists immeasurably with the moderation process, and many Moderators commented on the professionalism this attention to detail demonstrated.

However, despite the above some problems still persist and arise from misunderstanding of the regulations, inaccurate application of the generic mark scheme and a lack of understanding of what the specific parts of the Controlled Assessment task actually require – most of these will be dealt with later in this report. Now that the first two set of CA tasks are no longer valid **it is vital that centres ensure the tasks that candidates complete are still valid at the point when they are submitted, for the present cohort of GCSE students the only CAs valid for submission summer 2014 are those marked 2012-2014.**

N.B. The new formats CAs are only valid for the cohort of GCSE students that start their course in Sept 2013 and will be submitted summer 2015.

Part A: Enquiry

Although there is a choice of two enquiries within each enquiry theme, most centres chose to prepare their students for a single enquiry theme and focus on one of the bullet points. However, there were some centres who clearly allowed their students to choose the focus of their enquiry. Both approaches allowed students to produce enquiries that were interesting, well researched and produced personal judgements rather than just narrative and description. Some centres re-worded the bullet point into a question in order to provide a focus which is entirely appropriate for CA tasks that will finish in summer 2013. For centres using CA tasks 2012-2014 the bullet point has now been written as a question and that will be what students answer.

Where candidates performed the best the following features were evident:

- The focus of the answer was always on the focus of the enquiry – if the focus had a date range the answer contained evidence and analysis that stayed within that range – if the focus was on impact the answer contained evidence and analysis of effects and consequences.
- Answers were not always lengthy – indeed some Moderators were surprised by how much some candidates were able to write in 1 hour, but also noted that often shorter, well structured and focused responses achieved marks at top L3 and L4.

Where candidates performed the weakest the following features were evident:

- Answers gave an overview of the whole topic – particularly evident in CA1 Germany – lots of biographical information about Hitler, or description about the Second World War and what happened to the Jews post 1939.
- Answers that were based on over-detailed notes that led to unstructured description and narrative.

It is concerning, however, that some of these points were highlighted, in depth, in the 2011 and 2012 report, and yet still remains.

Students generally seem comfortable with the style of the enquiry assignment and Moderators saw work from across the full range of the mark scheme. Teachers were also confident in distinguishing between description and narrative which is Level 2, analysis which focused on the question which is Level 3, and sustained analysis, evaluation and judgement which is Level 4. Moderators commented that it was particularly helpful where candidates work was annotated at the point in the answer where the qualities of various levels had been displayed. For example phrases such as 'The effect of this was.....', 'This was effective because.....' were underlined. Also, many teachers put annotations in the margin such as 'L2 description', 'L3 analysis', 'L4 evaluation and judgement'. While it is not a requirement to write extensive summaries, Moderators noted that these types of brief

comments assisted significantly in the moderation process, much more so than a page full of ticks and a comment like 'Outstanding work'.

It is acceptable for teachers to help their students prepare for the Enquiry task and it is expected that class discussions will consider a range of points and issues raised by the focus of the enquiry. Teachers may also discuss and support planning – possibly using one of the other alternative Enquiries as an example, or a past out of date one if the class are being given a choice, or allowed their choice of which to do. However, students are expected to plan their own essays.

Moderators noted that in some centres student responses were very much the same. Moderators looked at notes and plans to see if a template had been used. Also, there were occasions where some students had written paragraphs that were practically identical. There were also candidates who had produced answers seemingly without any planning or notes.

The 2011, and 2012 report commented on what is permissible and the support that is available, and that remains unchanged and centres are urged to regularly review the specification in light of how they prepare and manage the Controlled Assessment.

In 2011 Moderators were concerned that the Enquiry task had caused anxiety amongst teachers regarding the strand within the mark scheme for rewarding the identification and use of sources. Students do not have to identify their sources through footnotes (although some do and this is perfectly acceptable) but they should make clear that they are selecting and deploying information from a range of sources. Moderators noted that this was not such a significant issue this summer. Many candidates had a prepared bibliography with numbered references and then in the body of the answer they put in brackets the number of the source they had used. This was by far the most common method used and seems to be the most straightforward, and therefore, for the purpose of this report recommended as a good example of 'best practice'. Centres were made aware in the 2011 report that high marks are not possible if some method of referencing the sources used is not evident in the body of the student answer. This is now a clear position that all centres should be aware of and ensure that they incorporate it in their assessment of the enquiry task.

During the moderation process this summer Moderators reported that many centres had got to grips with the above issue and candidates clearly identified their sources. However, there are centres that are not supporting their students with this requirement, and subsequently some mark reductions have been applied.

Moderators also noted that teachers and students seem much clearer about what a 'range of sources' means, and this was very evident in the work that was seen. While it is obvious that some of the sources candidates use will be the same, many candidates demonstrated how they had taken the time to research a variety of sources and this then assisted in their personal response to a historical question. Therefore, while bibliographies may be

similar, moderators expect to see differences in the notes candidates make, the use they make of the sources and the judgements they reach.

Moderators also reported that many centres provided some indication of how the students had been prepared for the Enquiry part of the assessment, and again this helped in the moderation process.

The overall impression from moderators was that many centres had taken on board lessons learnt from 2011 and that teachers and students were much more confident in what the Enquiry task required. Indeed, many Moderators noted that student responses were interesting, insightful and demonstrated some high level enquiry and research skills.

PART B: Representations

It was noted in 2011 and 2012 that some students treated the work on representations in the same way as they would treat sources in a Unit 3 question. The questions in Bi and Bii were not asking about how reliable or how useful and, therefore, an approach which focused on issues such as nature and origin should not score highly.

Moderators commented that, unfortunately, this issue still persists and were seen in some of the work that was moderated this summer. However, it is pleasing to note that some of the centres who experienced this problem last summer have taken on board advice from the 2012 PM report, and moderator reports, and had rectified it for this summer.

It still needs to be stressed that students need to appreciate that representations give an overall impression and their discussion and judgements need to be about that impression. The representation has been created by somebody, or institution and they need to think about what has been selected and omitted in the creation of that representation.

Moderators commented on the various ways in which students planned for Bi and Bii. Many used mind maps, charts, colour coding for similarity and difference, and the different criteria applied when making judgements. These approaches often led to well structured and focused answers.

PART Bi

Moderators commented that the vast majority of answers were at Level 2; candidates identified similarity and difference in detail, and that teacher's very confidently and accurately marked at that level.

It is important in this question to make sure students focus on the portrayal/impression given by the representation and not get 'bogged down' with why they might be the same or different. Those candidates that did this invariably then started to comment on reliability and utility.

The most successful approach was where students began their answer by identifying and comparing the overall impression created in each representation and then used the details of each to support their analysis. Also, candidates focused on the subtle nuances of difference and similarity in the representations. The following extract is from answer that displayed some of the above features.

'Both representations display aspects and perspectives of the Paramilitary Organisations within Northern Ireland particularly the emotion showed by both representations. Representation 1 provides an image depicting the emotional side of the paramilitary groups in the troubles and that of the anger and sadness that it had caused the republican movement. Representation 2 provides an extract from a book that was written to show some of the horror of the troubles that were caused by paramilitary organisations such as the UVF and the IRA. The author does not try to write emotionally but merely to provide the reader with an insight into the

happenings in Northern Ireland. The reader is enticed to read on and understand some of the emotion and violence going on at the time, and the anguish and sadness it caused innocent people.'

Part Bii

It was noted in the 2011 report that this was the question where the biggest reduction in marks occurred and that it was mainly because of an unbalanced approach to the mark scheme. This was also similarly noted in the 2012 PM Report.

Moderator comments for this summer suggest that the above issue is still a factor and similarly felt that it was within this question that they saw inconsistency of marking, and application of the mark scheme within centres and across centres. Many Moderators reported that they saw work from clearly able and indeed very able students who still approached this question as if it were a source evaluation question.

Therefore, there were many answers which assessed reliability and discussed bias. Many assessed on the grounds of nature, origin and purpose. Some candidates treated the exercise as one of cross-referencing and spent most of their answer comparing the representations based on what one included, or did not again the others.

Some centres have still not resolved the issue that was identified in 2011 and 2012 that candidates need to use some contextual own knowledge to support judgements about accuracy, or to explain why it is significant that something has been omitted. It is not sufficient to simply state 'I know this to be the case from my own knowledge'.

Many students used the criteria suggested within the mark scheme but teachers are still reminded that, while other valid criteria maybe used, the focus should be on the overall representation. Students should be encouraged to think about which representation is 'best' because it might be the most accurate or the most complete portrayal of the overall issue.

Also, it is important to stress that when the task is designed it is not the case that one of the representations is automatically the best. Students should be encouraged to consider for themselves and make judgements about which might be the better factually, or objectively, or emotionally. Indeed, they may judge that despite a representation being factually weak, it nevertheless portrays 'best' what the period or the issue was like at the time.

Candidates that successfully approached this task planned carefully the criteria they thought were the most appropriate, and had supporting contextual knowledge. Many centres had clearly used some of the suggested planning sheets from the support booklets in order to prepare their students. Again, for the purpose of this report Moderators commented that where they saw evidence of that type of planning and preparation candidates performed the best.

The third representation should be chosen with care – as emphasised in the 2012 report. Moderators commented that there are still some – particularly photographs – that do not fully meet the requirements of a representation. The support booklets contain representations that can be used, and centres are advised to consider these first.

It was also noted that some centres had used representations that had been used in the support booklet but as a 'worked example' – there was a suggested student exemplar response and a moderator response on how the answer could be improved. A good example would be the *Country Joe and the Fish song 'Feel Like I'm Fixing To Die Rag (Next Stop Vietnam)'* for CA5 Vietnam. These types of examples cannot be used.

Centres are reminded, however, that they can use representations (as a third rep) from CAs that have passed their 'sell by date'.

Administration

On the whole the administration of the Controlled Assessment by centres was thorough, accurate and well presented. However, Moderators commented that some issues still persist. Moderators suggest that the following help with the moderation process:

- Moderators need a copy of the third representation
- If the centre allows students to choose the Enquiry in Task A a copy of all the available tasks the students chose from should be sent
- Highest/lowest scoring work should be included whether on the OPTEMS or not
- Marks should be the same on candidate work/authentication sheet/OPTEMS
- A copy of the Controlled Assessment Task(s) should be included with the sample
- The sample is packaged in score order (highest to lowest)
- Each candidates work is packaged so that in order there is Task A and notes/plan/bibliography, Task Bi and notes/plan, Task Bii and notes/plan
- Some brief evidence of marking and internal moderation is on candidates work
- Some brief indication of how the CA was carried out and the nature of the timings for the write up sessions

Conclusion

It is always appreciated as a Principal Moderator (and a practising teacher) to witness the effort, professionalism and dedication that History teachers show towards preparing their students for examination work. This unit still clearly still presents us all with issues, anxieties and concerns. However, it is clear this summer that many centres have embraced these challenges, been prepared to seek advice, and act upon advice, in order to ensure that they give their students the best opportunity to engage with this unit. It is also clear that given those conditions students enjoy and rise to the challenge that this unit offers – their work is interesting, insightful, honest and replete with the skills that will equip them for further study and the 'outside world'.

Centres should continue to pay careful attention to E9 reports even if marks adjustments were not made. To those centres where adjustments have been recommended it should be noted that the judgement of the initial moderator has been reviewed and discussed by either a team leader or the principal moderator.

Centres where teachers and/or students found a task difficult, or where mark adjustments have been recommended, should note that there is a great amount of support available.

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