

Examiners' Report

June 2025

GCSE History 1HI0 B2

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Introduction

Section B of Paper 2 assesses the British Depth Study. Candidates answer four questions that target Assessment Objective 1 (Knowledge and Understanding) and Assessment Objective 2 (Analysis of Second Order Concepts). In 2025, the B paper was sat alongside the P paper, for a total of 64 marks. There were some changes to the structure of the paper and candidates had five minutes longer to complete both papers in 2025, following an update to the specification.

Questions 1a and 1b are worth two marks each and were new questions for 2025. In previous series, candidates were asked to identify two features or characteristics of one topic named in the question, adding further detail to each one, for a total of four marks. In the new assessment model, candidates are asked to describe two features of two different topics. They should then add additional material to develop each feature or provide context for it. These new questions follow an identical format to Q1a and Q1b on Paper 1.

Question 2 is scored out of 12 marks and the mark scheme is an identical format to Q4 on Paper 1 and Q2 on Paper 3. This question targets the second-order concept of causation. Two stimulus points are provided as prompts to remind candidates what they have studied. It is not intended that the stimulus points are examples of causes but will indicate or be linked to a wider cause. Candidates do not have to use the stimulus points and, indeed, should not use them if they do not recognise them. Candidates should aim to cover three aspects of content in their answer: this is required to score at the top of Level 3 or in Level 4.

For the final question on the paper, candidates have a choice between Question 3 and Question 4, each scored out of 16 marks. The questions may target any second-order concept, such as significance, consequence or similarity/difference. This question follows the same principles as Q5/6 on Paper 1. As with Q2, two stimulus points are provided to prompt candidates. It should be noted that the stimulus points will usually relate to aspects of content rather than directly indicating a factor that should be included; their use is not compulsory. There is an expectation that there will be both depth and breadth of knowledge to access the higher levels.

A number of candidates were able to demonstrate broad subject knowledge that supported marks being awarded in Level 3. Those answers that moved into Level 4 demonstrated an understanding of the conceptual focus of the question and provided a supported judgement, based on criteria; this judgement was often sustained throughout the answer, providing a coherent line of reasoning that developed to a thoughtful conclusion. The majority of answers at Level 4 presented a balanced argument but it should be noted that this is not a required structure, as long as the student's judgement is in relation to the full conceptual focus of the question.

At Level 2, candidates usually provided a good range of relevant content but often struggled to apply this to the second-order concept dictated in the question, often describing the 'how' or 'what' of the topic rather than addressing the question fully. It is important that candidates consider the question carefully and shape their answers in relation to its focus, whether this be causation, consequence, change and continuity, similarity and difference or significance.

In the British Depth Study, Q1a and Q1b use a points-based mark scheme, while Q2, Q3 and Q4 are marked using 'best fit' against a levels of response mark scheme. Progression in AO1 is shown

by the candidate's increasing ability to select information precisely and show wide-ranging knowledge and understanding. Progression in AO2 is demonstrated by moving from simple or generalised comments to analytical explanation, showing a line of reasoning which is coherent, logical and sustained.

The indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as an example of what candidates might write: it is not a list of what must be included in a response, nor does it give any expectation of how candidates are expected to structure their responses. Any valid analysis and detail are rewarded and examiners noted that some candidates demonstrated impressive knowledge and understanding, that went far beyond the indicative content.

Question 1

Question 1a

Describe one feature of the pogroms 1189–1190 against the Jewish population of England (2 marks)

Most candidates were able to confidently identify one clear feature of the pogroms during 1189–1190, with the York Pogrom at Clifford's Tower being the most commonly cited example. Responses typically described the siege and mass suicide of Jewish families under mob pressure during a period of rising Crusader fervour. The strongest answers made use of specific detail, such as March 1190, and referenced underlying causes like anti-Semitic sentiment and resentment over debts owed to Jewish moneylenders. Some students also recognised the Crown's indirect role, noting how Richard's absence and inconsistent protection contributed to escalating violence. However, weaker answers were vague or simply repeated the question, missing the requirement for a clearly described feature. A few responses strayed into general comments about persecution without anchoring them to a specific event. Overall, most candidates achieved full marks where factual accuracy and specificity were evident in the feature described.

Question 1b

Describe one feature of King Richard's involvement in the Third Crusade (2 marks)

Candidate responses to this feature question were generally strong and focused. The most frequently mentioned aspect was Richard's role at the Battle of Arsuf, often described as an example of his strategic military leadership. Other popular features included the siege of Acre, his negotiations with Saladin, and the fact that Richard never reached Jerusalem, all of which helped frame his role in the campaign. Some students referenced his alliances with European monarchs, particularly Philip II, though these were occasionally misattributed or lacked detail. Stronger answers offered accurate terminology and clearly distinguished his involvement from unrelated events like his capture on the way home. A few responses offered Richard's title as "leader of the Crusade," but failed to add a second detail to qualify the feature. Most candidates performed well, achieving 2 marks by offering one focused and well-explained feature that reflected secure subject knowledge.

- 1 (a) Describe **one** feature of the pogroms of 1189-90 against the Jewish population in England.

(2)
one feature of the pogroms of 1189-90 is that ~~the~~ Jews were targeted against. ~~where~~ This involved setting fire to their houses and some even killed. This was due to the idea that the Jews had placed a curse on Richard I at his crowning ceremony.

- (b) Describe **one** feature of King Richard's involvement in the Third Crusade.

(2)
one feature of King Richard's involvement in the Third Crusade was his ruthlessness. This was evident in the beheading of the 2000 prisoners in front of ~~the~~ Saladin's camp.



1a – The candidate identifies a valid feature: Jews were targeted, and supports it with relevant detail, such as the burning of houses or the belief that a curse had been placed on Richard at his coronation. The supporting information is concise but sufficient for full marks. The response shows secure factual understanding. 1b – The feature Richard's involvement was ruthless is clearly stated and supported with accurate detail: the beheading of 2,500 Muslim prisoners. This demonstrates relevant knowledge of his conduct during the campaign and justifies the full 2 marks.



Always make sure both your feature and supporting detail directly relate to the question being asked.

- 1 (a) Describe **one** feature of the pogroms of 1189-90 against the Jewish population in England.

(2)

One feature of the pogroms of 1189-90 is that ~~English attacked the Jews then Christians attacked~~ the Jews because they were unhappy and jealous ^{and poor} of the amount of money they had despite of their small population. This is because the Jews were moneylenders, therefore they controlled finances.

- (b) Describe **one** feature of King Richard's involvement in the Third Crusade.

sided with the Jews.
(2)

One feature of King Richard's involvement in the Third Crusade is that he showed he was a good warrior. This is because, the Christians took ~~Jaffa~~ Acre, won the battle of Arsuf and took Jaffa because of his tactics.

(Total for Question 1 = 4 marks)

~~This was important beca~~ This was because they controlled finances and moneylending which the King needed to tax people. This meant he depended the Jews



1a – The candidate identifies a valid feature: King Richard defended the Jewish population, and supports this with relevant information: his financial reliance on Jewish money lending. This shows secure knowledge of the relationship between royal policy and the Jewish community, and earns the full 2 marks. 1b – The response correctly identifies Richard as a good leader and supports this with one valid example from battle— Arsuf, Acre, or Jaffa. This demonstrate relevant knowledge of his military success and leadership qualities during the campaign. One example is sufficient for credit.



Keep your feature and supporting detail clearly separate—use two distinct sentences or a connective like 'This meant that...' to make sure they don't blend into one. Examiners need to see both parts easily.

Question 2

Explain why the barons rebelled against King John in 1215 (12 marks)

This question was generally well answered, with candidates demonstrating awareness of both long-standing grievances and immediate triggers behind the baronial rebellion. Most candidates used frameworks such as the “4Fs” (Finances, Fairness, Favourites, France) to structure their response.

The most commonly cited causes included John’s use of arbitrary power, heavy taxation — including multiple scutages — and unfair treatment of nobles. Key examples such as John’s harsh actions toward William de Braose helped reinforce points about cruelty and royal overreach. Strong candidates described how John’s seizure of Braose’s lands and the treatment of his family revealed deep mistrust and abuse of feudal norms, fostering resentment among the baronial class. The Church Interdict imposed by the Pope was frequently mentioned and was a valuable example of John’s strained relationship with ecclesiastical authority. Better responses highlighted how the suspension of religious services outraged not only the Church but also many barons, some of whom feared for their spiritual well-being and local unrest. Some candidates also referred to the controversial murder of Arthur, John’s nephew, which raised suspicions about John’s moral character and further eroded baronial loyalty. Although not all students explored this in sufficient detail, it was a strong indicator of John’s perceived instability and threats to legitimate succession. Short-term triggers were often included, particularly the defeat at the Battle of Bouvines (1214), which significantly damaged John’s prestige and pushed barons toward open rebellion. However, confusion persisted between this and the earlier loss of Normandy in 1204. A recurring issue was a failure to clearly explain why these cumulative grievances erupted specifically in 1215, which was essential for higher marks. Top-level responses carefully distinguished between ongoing resentment and the tipping point reached that year. These answers made explicit links between feudal breakdowns, John’s refusal to negotiate, and the emergence of Magna Carta as a pressured response to rebellion. Many responses fell within Level 2 or low Level 3 due to limited coverage or underdeveloped causation. Full marks were typically achieved by those who integrated three or more well-explained causes, avoided chronological confusion, and addressed why 1215 marked the moment rebellion became inevitable.

2 Explain why the barons rebelled against King John in 1215.

(12)

You **may** use the following in your answer:

- defeat in Normandy (1214)
- arbitrary power

You **must** also use information of your own.

The Barons ~~rebelled~~ rebelled against King John in 1215 because of his defeat in Normandy in 1214. This gave the Barons the idea that John was not a suitable king and could not lead armies into war. John had many bad traits about him which the Barons ~~disliked~~ didn't like and it made him unstable and an unfit king. So the defeat in Normandy was a key event in why the barons rebelled against John.

The barons also rebelled against John because of his actions and that they are very reckless.



Level 2 (5 marks) The response demonstrates a developing explanation with some analysis (AO2), such as recognising that John was “not a suitable king” and hinting at the consequences of his behaviour, like the use of arbitrary power. However, the reasoning is not sustained or clearly developed, which limits progression into Level 3. Knowledge is limited and lacks depth (AO1). While the candidate references that John “led armies into war”, this is vague and not expanded with accurate detail relating to the defeat in Normandy or its impact on baronial confidence. Key features of the period—such as taxation or legal abuses—are either missing or underexplored. Judgement is either implicit or undeveloped. To improve, the candidate needs to explain how different factors contributed to the rebellion, weighing their importance and linking them back to the question focus. Stimulus points like the Normandy defeat and arbitrary rule are not compulsory, but thoughtful reference to them could have supported a clearer structure and more focused analysis.



Don't rely on general statements—build each argument with precise knowledge.

2 Explain why the barons rebelled against King John in 1215.

(12)

You **may** use the following in your answer:

- defeat in Normandy (1214) - money (for war)
- arbitrary power - treatment of barons

You **must** also use information of your own.

There were many reasons ~~that~~ ^{why} the Barons of England rebelled against King John in 1215. Firstly, John's defeat in Normandy in 1214 was one reason. The Barons had supported King Richard for his ~~success~~ success in Normandy. However when John took over, he lost Normandy and all the work ~~to~~ ^{that} Richard had done. He also signed a peace treaty which made him Philip's vassal. His defeat in wars, like Normandy, earned him the nicknames 'softsword' and 'luckland', indicating ~~to~~ his unpopularity throughout England.

Secondly, because of Normandy and other wars, John was increasing scutage ~~tax~~. The barons were extremely unhappy to see all of their money that they ~~gave~~ ^{gave} go to waste as John continued to lose war after war. This was a major reason that the ~~Barons~~ ^{barons} rebelled against John as they refused to continue paying money on him when his wars almost always led to him losing.

Finally, John treated many of the barons very badly. Richard

had respected the barons, and received great respect back from them too. However, John, following the earlier incidents, did not get on with the barons very well. He ~~rather~~ mistreated them and had no respect for them. For one baron, he starved his wife and children in captivity. This was the final straw for most of the barons, and ~~led~~ to this led to the first baron war.



Level 3 (9 marks) The response presents an explanation that is mostly focused on the question (AO2). A line of reasoning is generally sustained, with phrases such as “indicating his unpopularity in England” and “this was the last straw and led to rebellion”, which show an emerging ability to link cause to outcome. However, the argument lacks refinement and depth, as the connections between causes are not fully developed or evaluated. Knowledge is accurate and broadly relevant (AO1), with references such as “Philip’s vassal”, “scutage”, and “soft sword” demonstrating secure understanding of features linked to John’s reputation and policies. The inclusion of specific terminology strengthens the response, though more contextual detail—particularly about the impact of these features on different groups—would help raise the level further. Judgement is either underdeveloped or implicit. The response could be improved by explicitly weighing causes against each other to show why one factor carried more significance in leading to rebellion.



Always connect your explanation to the wording of the question. If it asks about ‘significance’ or ‘why’, show clearly how your point supports a judgement or cause.

Question 3

‘Support from the King of France was the main reason why John was able to secure the throne of England.’ How far do you agree? (16 marks)

This evaluative question was generally well understood, though student performance varied depending on how effectively responses balanced the stated factor against alternative explanations. Many candidates addressed support from Philip II, referencing the diplomatic stability achieved through the Treaty of Le Goulet (1200), which recognised John's claim to the continental lands and helped secure a peaceful foundation for his reign. However, stronger responses clarified that this treaty occurred after John's succession and therefore could not be the main reason why he gained the throne in 1199, limiting its direct relevance. More perceptive candidates shifted focus onto additional factors. The most successfully developed arguments emphasised that Richard I had named John his heir prior to his death, providing royal endorsement and legitimacy. Students who explored this used it to challenge the importance of French support, instead framing Richard's decision as the more decisive factor. The role of Eleanor of Aquitaine was recognised by many high-level responses as pivotal in neutralising Arthur of Brittany's rival claim. Candidates who understood Eleanor's political authority and personal influence made strong arguments about her ability to rally continental baronial support toward John, especially in Aquitaine and Anjou. A number of students also discussed the crucial backing John received from William Marshal, whose loyalty and military prowess enabled John to consolidate his claim domestically. These responses noted Marshal's ability to secure key castles and maintain noble support during the uncertain transition, offering internal strength that rivalled any foreign endorsement. Less confident answers focused narrowly on the stated factor—support from France—without evaluating alternatives or questioning its relevance. Some narrative accounts described events without linking them to the question's conceptual demand. Judgements were frequently asserted rather than developed, and historical detail sometimes lacked precision. Most responses sat within Level 2 or Level 3. Level 4 was reserved for answers that weighed three or more factors, integrated well-selected evidence—including the influence of Eleanor, the legacy of Richard's nomination, and Marshal's domestic role—and presented a supported, well-reasoned conclusion.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.

Chosen question number: Question 3 ☒

Question 4 ☒

^{partially agree}
I ~~partially~~ agree that 'Support from the King of France was the main reason why John was able to secure the throne of England'. As he had signed a peace treaty with King Phillip II, which meant that France wouldn't try to invade England, and therefore ~~temporarily~~ temporarily secured the throne of England for John. However, this did not protect John from rebels or other monarchs, and therefore, John's position was always in Jeopardy.

One huge reason why John was able to secure the throne of England was that before his death, Richard had made John his heir to the throne, therefore greatly helping him to secure the throne, as Richard was a beloved leader, with the nickname 'Lionheart' and the barons and civilians mostly all trusted his judgement, as they had so often done

during his reign. John's claim was also supported by his mother, and the widow of the late King Henry II, both his mother and father were extremely well respected by the barons, and her judgement, like Richard's, was trusted.

Another reason that John was able to secure the throne was ~~his~~ ^{the} lack of opposition claims. When John found out about his nephew, Prince ~~Arthur's~~ ^{Arthur's} claim ~~that~~ to the throne, he violated many rules, and imprisoned Arthur in chains, considered castrating him, and ultimately, executed him. Therefore, his ~~claims~~ claims were no more. John also agreed that King Malcolm of Scotland would not have to pay homage to him, so long as he drops his claims on the North of England, such as ~~Northumberland~~ Cumberland. Welsh King Llewelyn was ~~also~~ also approached in a similar manner, with the chance of a Welsh invasion probable. By the time he was crowned as regent, John ~~was~~ had by far the best claims to the throne, with the best backing of the nobility.

Another crucial reason that John was able to secure the throne was that he was a brilliant Strategist, and knew how to win battles. John was also known to be a highly skilled and experienced warrior, meaning ~~that + it~~ that the Barons had faith that he would be able to prevent any invasions, whether from Phillip, Llewelyn, or Malcolm. John was also ~~known~~ known to be a very devout Catholic, ~~with~~ which was proved after he visited Bury St Edmunds and Canterbury, following his coronation. ⁺⁺ His dedication ~~to~~ appeased the Pope and the Catholic Church, meaning that John had the backing of the 'Holy Father on Earth', who was to be trusted. This once again meant the population trusted the Pope, and agreed in John's ascension to the throne, as they believed that John was chosen by God himself. John also worked with the Papacy to produce a revised Magna Carta, approved by ~~the~~ the church, leading to more approval from the Pope.

In Conclusion, it could be argued that Richard was the most important factor that led to John securing his throne. However, I would argue that his claims to the throne and support from well respected individuals, his lack of opposition claiming the throne, and his character and religious ~~devotion~~ devotion, leading to him being favoured by the pope, were all more important to John in securing the throne. Therefore, I disagree that 'Support from the king of France was the main reason why John ~~was~~ was able to secure the throne of England'.



Level 3 (12 marks) The response provides a structured explanation that remains focused on the question, with a line of reasoning that is generally sustained throughout (AO2). Points such as “temporarily secured the throne” and “by the time he was crowned John had the best claims with the best backings” show that the candidate is beginning to link knowledge to causation and assess relative importance. Relevant and accurate knowledge is used to support points (AO1), including references to the peace treaty with Philip II, the imprisonment of Prince Arthur, and familial associations such as the widow of Henry II and Richard the Lionheart. This demonstrates secure understanding of dynastic and political context. A judgement is given and some justification is offered, suggesting an attempt to evaluate the main cause. However, the criteria for assessing significance—such as long-term versus short-term support, legitimacy, or rival claims—are not made fully explicit. To achieve Level 4, the response would need to compare causes more sharply and explain why one factor mattered most. Stimulus points are used, although not developed in full depth. Their inclusion helps direct the argument, but does not dominate or define the structure.



Ensure you assess three different aspects of content.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.

Chosen question number: Question 3 ☒ Question 4 ☒

I strongly agree with this statement, because when King Richard was captured it gave time for his brother King John to ~~pe~~ plot against him. King John could have got the ransom and payed to get King Richard out however he doesn't proving his unloyalty towards his own blood.

King John made a peace treaty with Philip II (The king of France) this helped him to secure the throne of England because this meant that King John has an ally.

It is believed that King John murdered his nephew, Prince Arthur. This would be surprising because King John would do anything to get the throne.

~~How ever~~ However ~~pe~~ some people ~~may~~ may disagree with this statement because they think that ~~R~~ King Richard could have gotten the crown back however because ~~the~~ King Richard ~~is~~ ~~arguable~~ was a noble King, he forgave King John and let him become king. Although he ~~let~~ ~~this happen~~ ~~he~~ forgave him, ~~the~~ King Richard humiliated King John.



Level 2 (6 marks) The response presents a basic explanation with limited analysis (AO2). Points such as “proving his unloyalty” and “would do anything for the throne” suggest an attempt at reasoning, but the line of argument is not sustained or consistently directed at the question. Connections between cause and outcome remain underdeveloped. Knowledge shows some relevance to the period (AO1), with references like “King Richard was captured”, “ally”, and “forgave him”, which indicate partial understanding. However, elements of confusion around chronology and relationships limit the effectiveness of the explanation. Misinterpretations of events weaken the response, and irrelevant content has been disregarded. A judgement is present but asserted without justification (AO2). There is no structured weighing of different causes or explanation of why one might be more significant than others. To progress, the candidate would need clearer use of specific and accurate knowledge and a stronger analytical framework that links causes directly to the outcome—John securing the throne.



Build your judgement with clear comparisons between factors in order to decide which is more important.

Question 4

'In medieval England, life for ordinary people in towns was very different from the lives of peasants in the countryside.' How far do you agree? (16 marks) This question was tackled with confidence by most candidates, though quality varied depending on how well they understood the conceptual demand of similarity and difference. Stronger responses compared multiple aspects such as freedom, types of work, role of religion, living conditions, and social structure, applying criteria and reaching balanced judgements. Students frequently identified guilds, apprenticeships, and craft-specific roles in towns, contrasting these with agricultural labour and manorial obligations in villages. Particularly impressive were responses that recognised how apprentices, though urban, were often subject to strict control, mirroring the dependency of villeins in rural settings. Some students explored the wider range of jobs available in towns, from trades and merchants to civic roles, whereas the countryside was primarily linked to subsistence farming and feudal service. A number of candidates referenced the defensive advantages of towns, highlighting stone walls and gates as protective features absent in the countryside. Living conditions were a popular focus, with accurate comparisons drawn around housing quality, overcrowding, and spread of disease—though some responses overstated urban prosperity or oversimplified rural hardship. The role of women was occasionally included; better responses recognised that women's participation varied by setting, with involvement in household work, crafts, and market life in towns, and field labour and domestic roles in villages. A key feature of stronger responses was their treatment of the Church, which was rightly noted as a shared and influential force in both environments. Candidates who explored its presence in daily life—through festivals, moral teachings, and spiritual guidance to avoid hell—demonstrated sound understanding and earned credit for depth of comparison. However, many weaker responses included factual errors, such as claiming that villages did not have churches, or misrepresented the Church's influence entirely. Lower-level responses tended to describe town and village life in isolation, listing details without direct comparison or a sustained line of reasoning. Judgements were frequently asserted without support. A few responses drifted into unrelated content or narrative accounts of medieval life.

Most candidates achieved Level 2 or low Level 3, with Level 4 awarded to those who addressed three or more aspects, used accurate terminology, made balanced comparisons, and reached a justified conclusion.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.

Chosen question number: Question 3 ☒

Question 4 ☒

I fully agree with this statement as peasants suffered a much harder and much more difficult life than people in towns. This was because of the role of being a villen, the standard of living, and the influence of the church.

One reason why the lives of peasants in the countryside was very different to the life of an ordinary person in a town was because of the job role villen. The peasants in the countryside were ~~the~~ villens which meant that they worked the land but did not own the land. ~~As~~ As a villen, they were paid extremely little and so had tough luck building a living. What's more, peasants could almost never step foot outside their village, meaning they could only do one job otherwise they'd die. This is very different to town people who were more free to move around and had a wider variety of jobs available to them. ~~The~~ Overall, this presents one reason why the lives of peasants in the countryside was very different to the life of an ordinary person in a town.

Another reason why the lives of peasants in the countryside was very different to the lives of town people

was because of the standard of living. Peasants would often have to work for most of the day - sometimes in bad conditions. As a result of this, they only get paid very little and so can't afford much. Therefore, they are reliant on their harvests for food to live.

This was a bit different for town people as they ~~that~~ were paid more and could therefore afford more food.

This meant they were less dependant on things like their own harvest. What's more, the increased pay means that they can afford a nicer property with a higher standard of living. Overall, this presents another reason why the lives of peasants was very different to the lives of town people.

A final reason why the lives of peasants was very different to the lives of town people was because of the influence of the church. Due to peasants living in the countryside, they couldn't have access to a church, and at this time religion was hugely important. As a result of them not having a church, they would have very little understanding about religion and what it involves. However, all town people would have had access to a church and could therefore experience and learn about their religion. Overall, this presents another reason why the lives of peasants was very

different from the lives of town people

overall, I fully agree with the statement that the lives of peasants was very different to the lives of town people because of their role of villeins, their poor standard of living, and their absence of the church's influence.



Level 3 (9 marks) The candidate presents a broadly focused explanation with a generally sustained line of reasoning (AO2). Statements such as “townspeople were free” and “peasants got paid very little” show an emerging effort to compare experiences and draw out key differences. The argument remains directed at the question but lacks deeper development across multiple areas. The response includes accurate and relevant knowledge (AO1), demonstrating secure understanding of rural hardship through points like “working most of the day”, “reliant on harvests”, and “did not own the land”. However, breadth is limited, with only two aspects of comparison explored. The third element—church influence—is not credited due to factual error. Judgement is present and partially justified, although criteria for comparison—such as freedom, stability, or economic independence—are left implicit rather than stated and applied. To progress, the response would benefit from using more examples and clearly defined criteria to guide the comparison, alongside a wider range of knowledge covering town life, rural constraints, and religious impact.



Define your comparison criteria clearly; that keeps your judgement focused and your argument structured.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.

Chosen question number: Question 3 ☒ Question 4 ☒

I would say I agree with this statement to ~~some extent~~ quite some extent.

If we look at the countryside, peasants were normally led under the leadership of Lords who controlled their lives fully. Whereas in the town, ~~peasants~~ ^{people} lived under the reign of charter. Another key difference was that in the countryside, peasants were often always working and had to follow strict commands of the Lord. Especially for villeins, they could be sold whenever they wanted and also killed if demanded by the Lord. So pretty much ~~as~~ life was very harsh for peasants in the countryside. On the other hand, people living in towns were given a lot more freedom. As long as they paid entrance fees and taxes, they were given the opportunity to roam freely and trade. One benefit was that ordinary people in towns also could not be sold or killed by the charter.

Another key difference, supporting the statement was the way in which they lived. For countryside peasants they often lived in houses made of ~~red~~ mud and straw. And so often battling weather conditions was very hard. They had to rely on straw to keep hot and comfy within their houses. Whereas in towns, people often lived in Guilds, which were wooden ~~houses~~ buildings, that were safer and had better conditions. Most people could survive during the harsh conditions. Overall, we can see how the life of a peasant in a countryside is massively different to a person living in a town.

On the other hand, it could be argued that their lives were pretty similar due to influence of church. The Church played a key role in both peasants ~~and~~ and people's lives. Many believed that going to heaven was a really important goal or otherwise being in hell was seen as proper scare to many. For both types of people, they had to pay 10% of their salary to the church [tithe], otherwise

It was seen as a sin and causes them to go to hell. On top of this for both people, the Pope had the ability to excommunicate them which was seen as the most serious punishment, whereby a member was banned from the Church and all its services. And so this could lead their lives into hell. So clearly we can see how the Church has a massive effect on the medieval people's lives and how it controlled them.

Another small ~~similarity~~ similarity between peasants and ordinary people was that they lived a very short life. Many people often lived only up to 40 due to the harsh living conditions and life back then. It was very common for diseases to break out so due to lack of medication, people died very easily.

In conclusion, I would say the lives of ordinary people in towns and the lives of peasants in the countryside have both their differences and similarities. Whether it's their living condition or their life

they lead, ultimately both also have a massive impact from the church and life expectancy.



Level 4 (14 marks) The candidate presents a clear and analytical explanation that is consistently focused on the question throughout (AO2). The response explores differences such as legal protections provided by town charters, relative freedom of townspeople, and contrasts these with peasant dependence and harsh rural conditions. Phrases like “could not be sold or killed” and “overall life in towns was massively different” reflect developed analysis and demonstrate a mature understanding of social contrasts. Knowledge is wide-ranging and accurate (AO1), with strong references to charters, entrance fees and taxes, and religious obligations such as tithes. These details are used precisely to support points and compare experiences meaningfully across settings. While the judgement is clear and linked to the argument (AO2), some evaluative criteria remain implicit. The response alludes to aspects such as freedom, economic burden, and the role of the church, but does not explicitly define or weigh them. Clarifying these would enhance the argument and push the judgement toward Level 4 for AO2. Overall, the response demonstrates secure Level 4 performance for AO1 and upper Level 3 for AO2. The best-fit mark of 14 is awarded.



Support your analysis with precise knowledge; this builds stronger comparisons and keeps your reasoning focused.

Paper Summary

Based on the performance seen on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Ensure that you revise content from all the sections on the specification.
- Take care to learn the topic-specific vocabulary and practise using it.
- A secure understanding of chronology is fundamentally important: carefully check the date ranges used in questions.
- Use your time wisely – don't write too much for Q1a and Q1b.
- Aim to write something for every question, even if it is just general knowledge about the topic: every mark counts.
- Demonstrate depth of knowledge by including specific evidence where possible; this could include names, dates, statistics or events.
- Remember that the 16-mark question asks you to evaluate the statement in the question. Plan your answer so that you develop a consistent line of argument.
- Structuring your answer into paragraphs will make your line of reasoning clearer.
- If you run out of space, continue your answer on an additional sheet of paper and indicate this clearly in your booklet. Ensure that this paper only includes extra material for the B paper and attach it to the B paper booklet.
- If typing using a word processor, or using additional paper, you should answer the B and P papers in separate documents.

Grade boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:
<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html>

