

GCSE History

Exam Insights May/June 2024



Welcome to this Professional Development Course

Welcome to this GCSE History exam insights event for the May/June 2024 exam series.

This session will provide insights and feedback on this summer's exam series. It will focus on the performance of some of the key questions in the series and provide analysis to support. The session will point out key statistical performance data that may help you with planning for the year ahead.

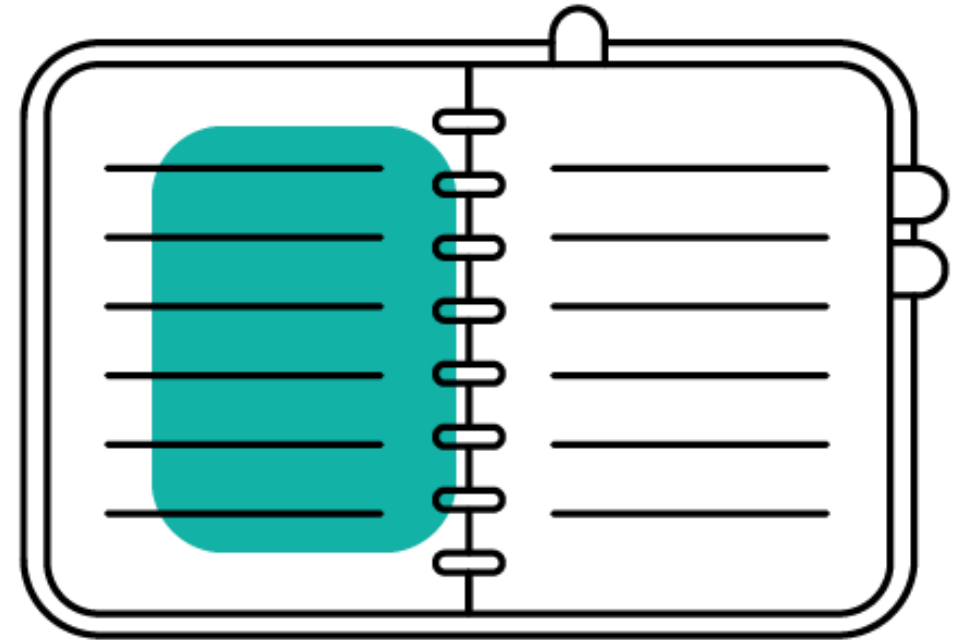
Sam Slater is a head of History, experienced examiner, author, and a Pearson GCSE History subject specialist.



Agenda

In this session we are going to look at:

- the performance of candidates in the May/June 2024 series
- the variation of candidates' performances on different questions and why performance varies
- the Examiner Reports
- common issues and FAQs



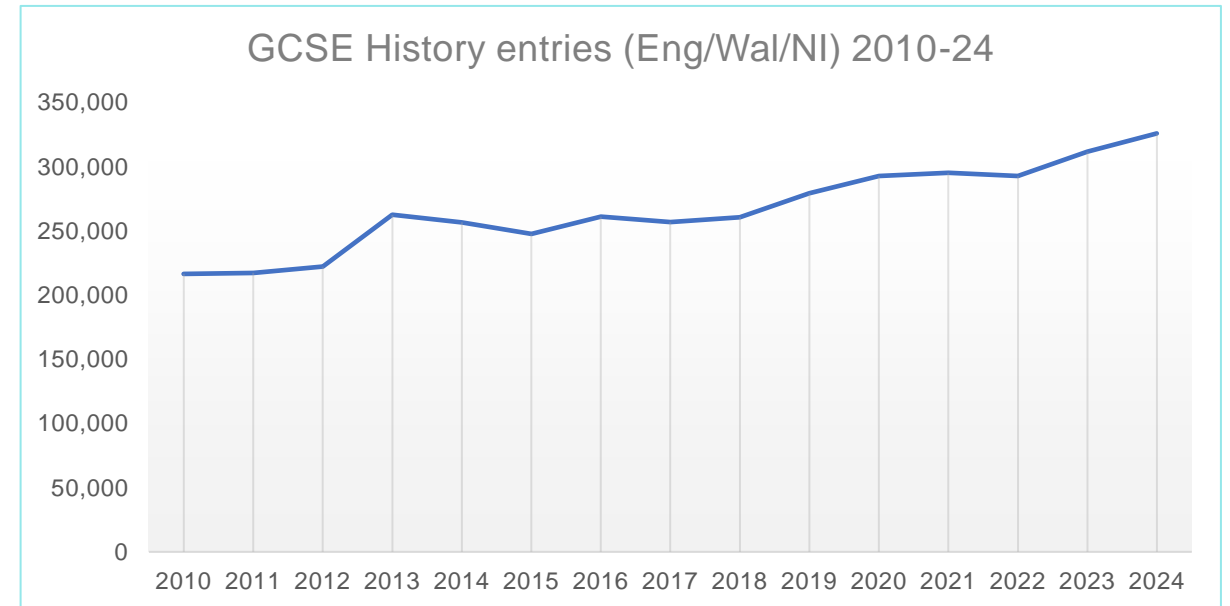
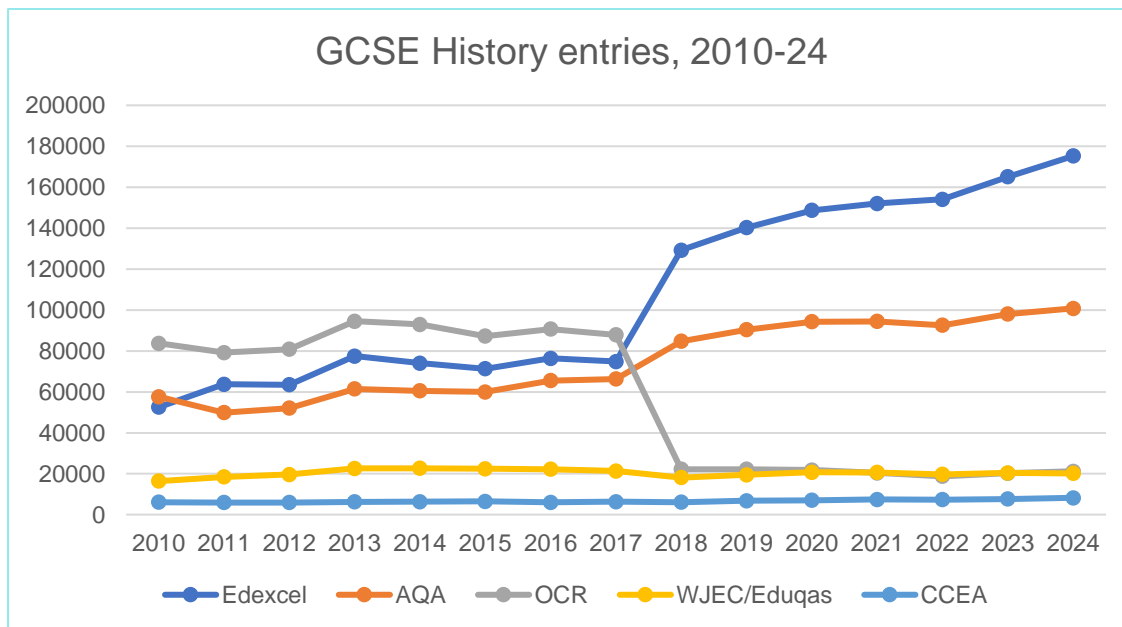
Summer 2024 entry data



GCSE History entries

Total entries (all boards)

- GCSE History continues to be very popular.
- In Summer 2024, over 325,000 students entered for GCSE History (Eng/Wales/NI) – an increase of 14,000 from the previous summer, and 65,000 from first assessment in 2018.



Pearson Edexcel

- We had 175,261 entries this summer.
- Our entries have increased c.35% since first assessment in 2018.
- This is due to increased cohort sizes (c.65 in 2018; c.80 in 2024) as well as centres switching to Edexcel.

Summer 2024 – review and stimulus points cap

- Following the feedback received on our Summer 2023 question papers we carried out a review and additional checks on all 17 of the Summer 2024 question papers.
- Our senior examiners and colleagues in the wider Pearson History team reviewed the papers with a focus on the clarity of questions, the use of stimulus, and the use of dates in questions.
- We're aware that many lower-attaining students fail to attempt essay questions, and the main purpose of the stimulus should be to give such students more confidence to attempt these questions. The review focused on ensuring the stimulus were accessible to a wide range of students.
- We will look at how the stimulus points worked this summer, and we will continue with this emphasis in future exam series.
- NB The only change to the assessment model in Summer 2024 concerned the stimulus points.
 - The Level 2 cap was removed (the cap is unchanged for Levels 3 and 4). This meant that students could achieve the top of Level 2 without going beyond aspects prompted by the stimulus
 - The wording of the cap at Levels 3 and 4 was updated to make the requirement clearer to students.

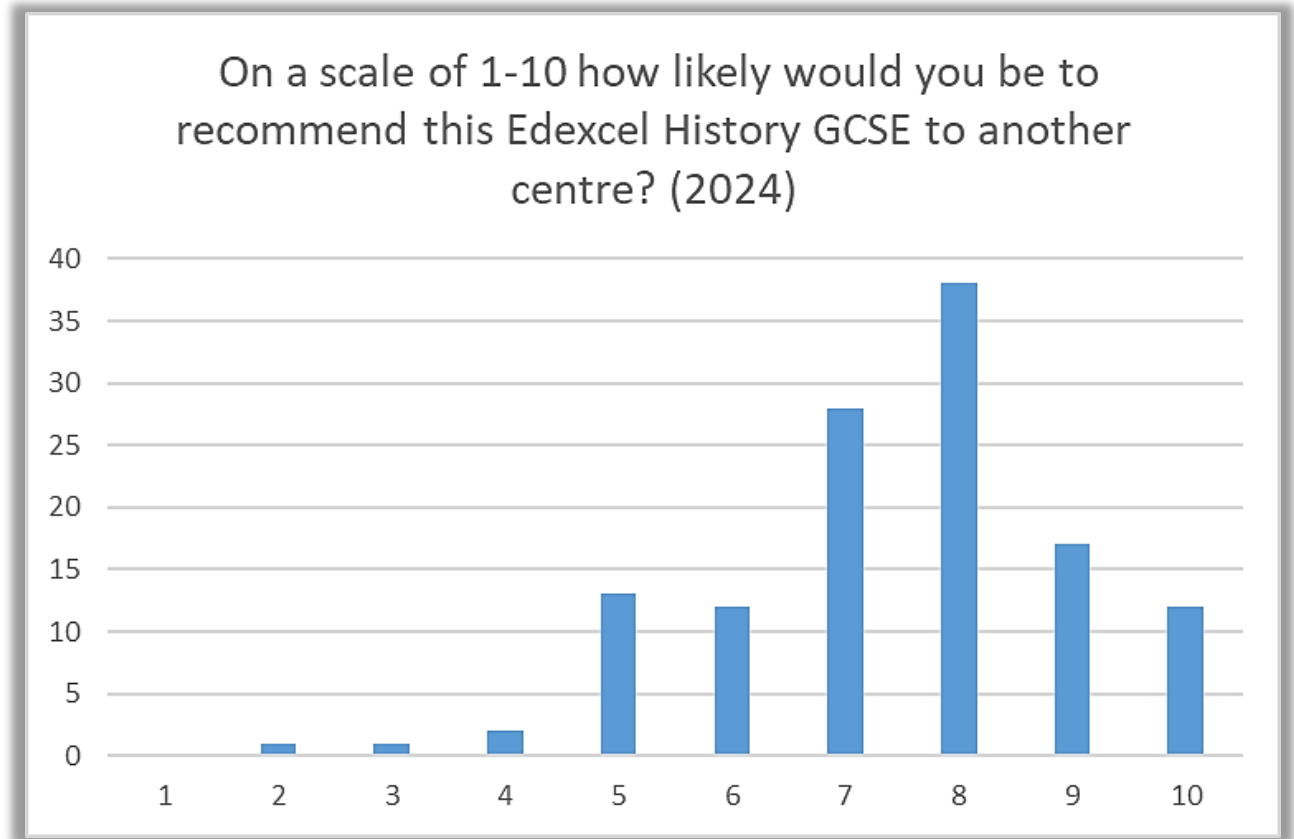


Teacher and student feedback

Following this summer's exams, we ran surveys with Edexcel GCSE History teachers and students and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

Teachers (127 responses)

- 80% of teachers surveyed either strongly agreed or agreed that overall, they were satisfied with the May/June 2024 papers.
- 87% of teachers surveyed either strongly agreed or agreed that overall, their students were satisfied with the May/June 2024 papers.
- 98% of teachers surveyed told us there were questions that provided sufficient challenge for the most able students.
- The average mark in response to the statement on the right was 7.5.



Teacher and student feedback

Following this summer's exams, we also ran a survey with Edexcel GCSE History students, and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

Students (437 responses)

- 63% of students surveyed either strongly agreed or agreed that exam questions were clear and easy to understand.
- 64% of students surveyed either strongly agreed or agreed that exam questions gave them a chance to show what they had learnt.

10. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about our GCSE History exams?

The length of time for each exam paper was about right

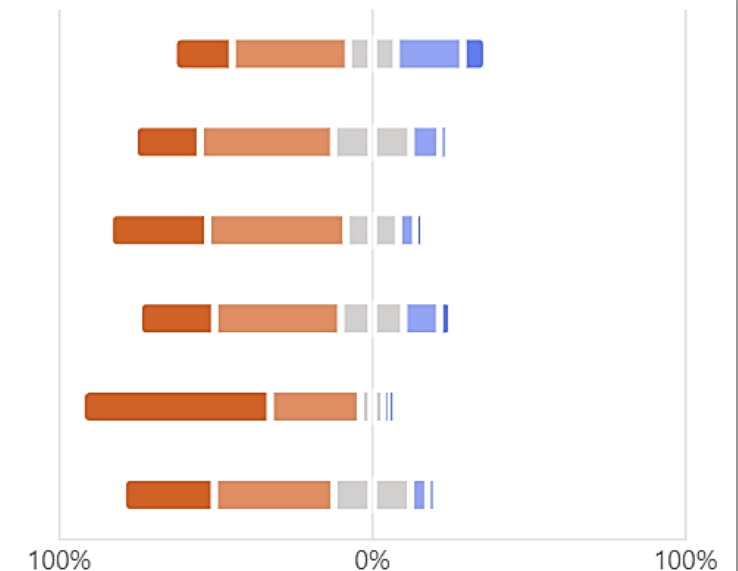
The exam questions were clear and easy to understand

I knew what I needed to do to answer the questions

The exam questions gave me a chance to show what I had learnt

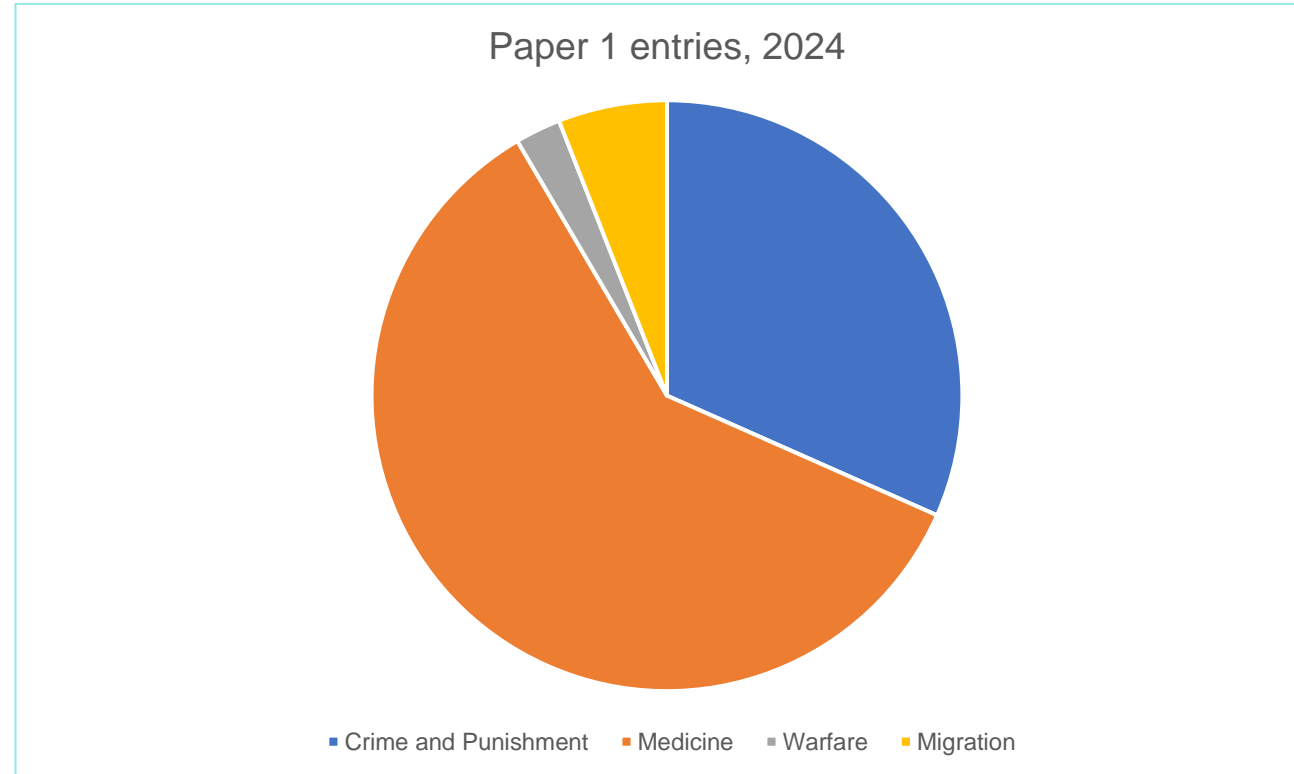
I liked having a choice of questions

I liked the different types of question



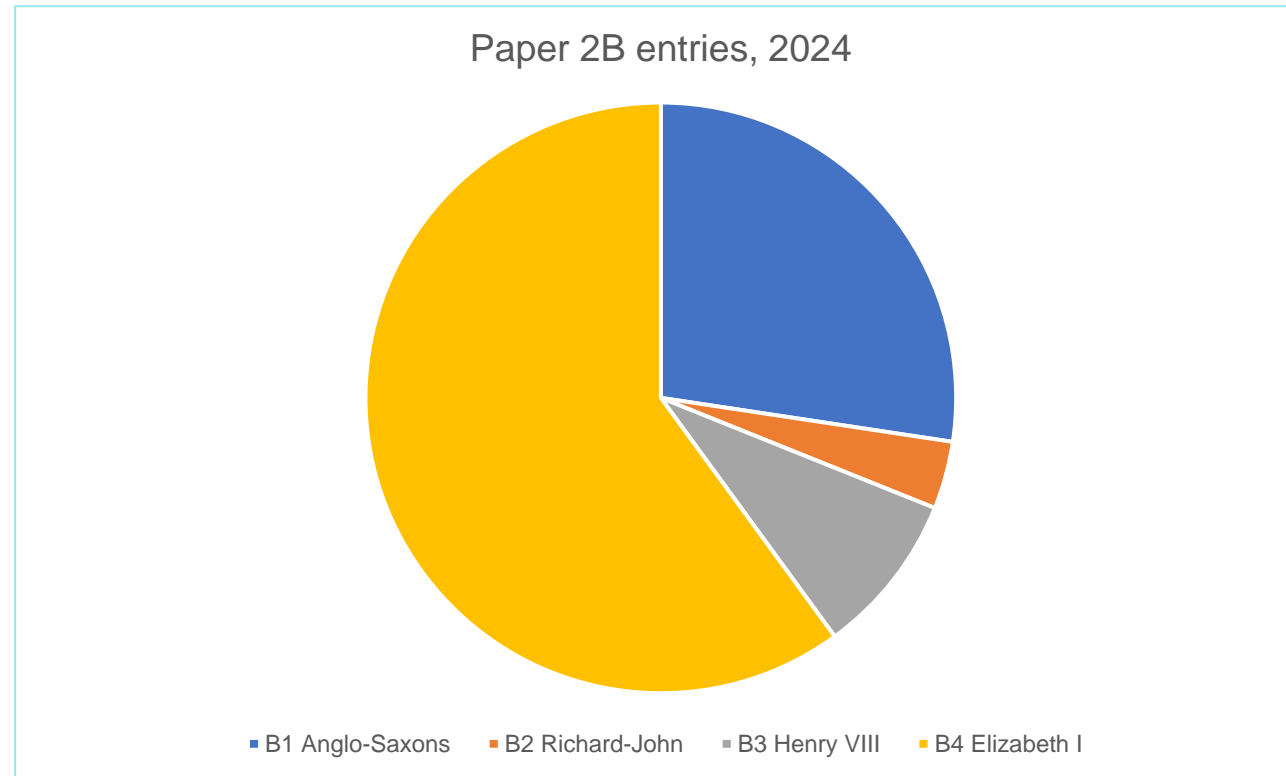
● Strongly agree ● Agree ● Neutral ● Disagree ● Strongly disagree

Paper 1 entries by option



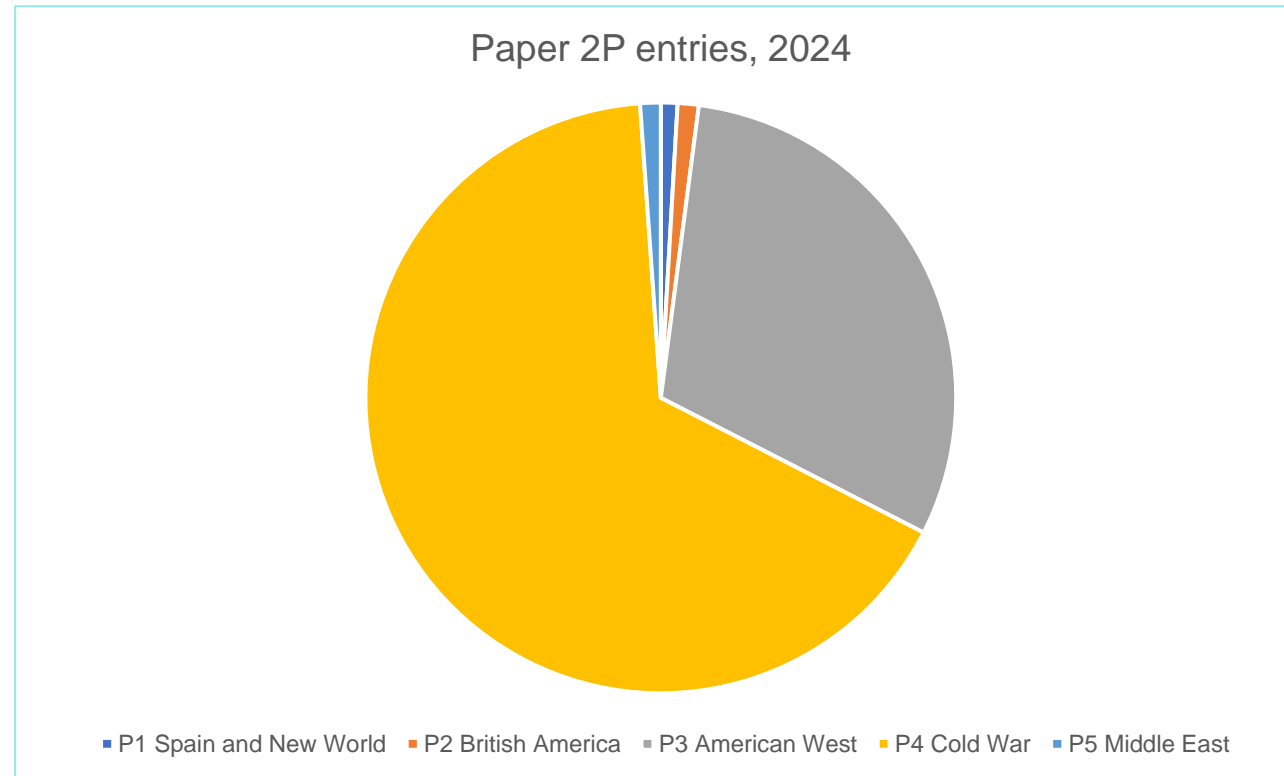
- **Medicine** continues to be the most popular thematic study, with 60% of entries.
- We were very pleased to see the continued rapid uptake of **Migrants in Britain** – entries doubled this year, with over 10,000 entries from 151 centres. We expect further growth next summer.

Paper 2B entries by option



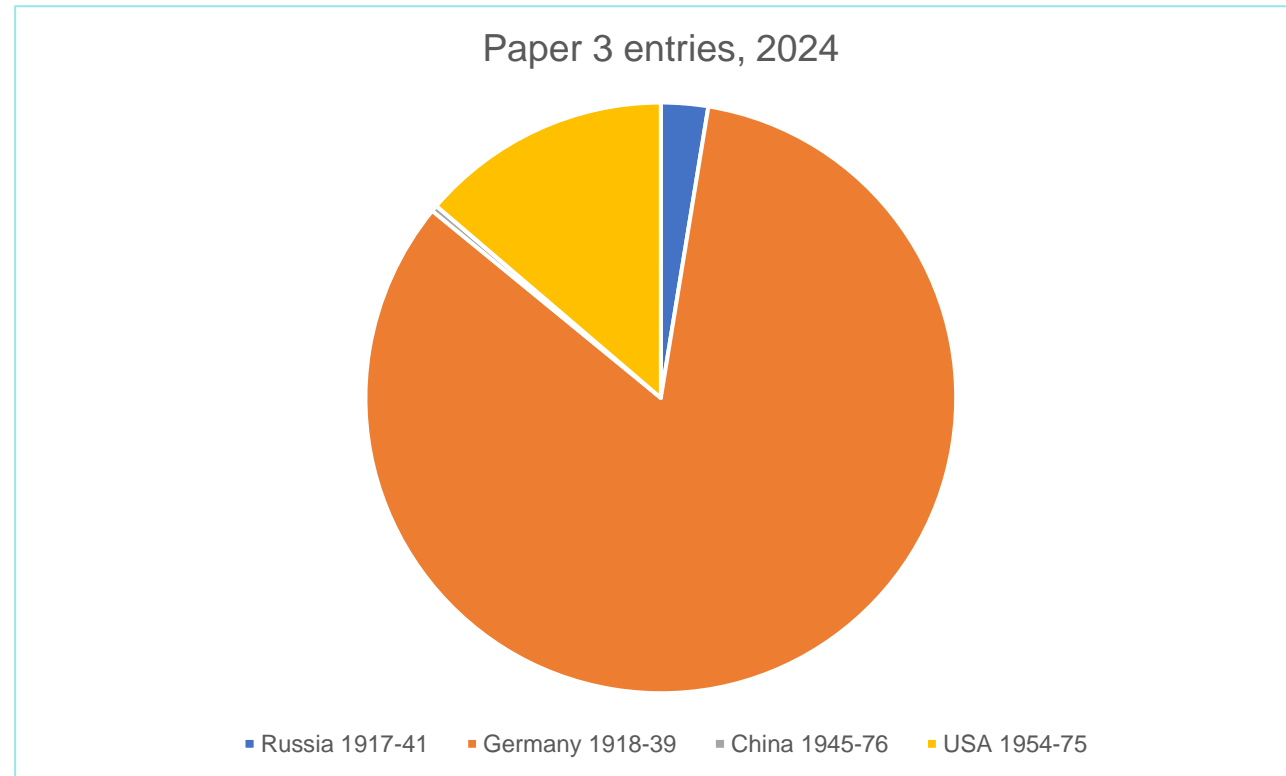
- **Early Elizabethan England** and **Anglo-Saxons and Normans** remain the most popular options (87% of British depth study entries).

Paper 2P entries by option



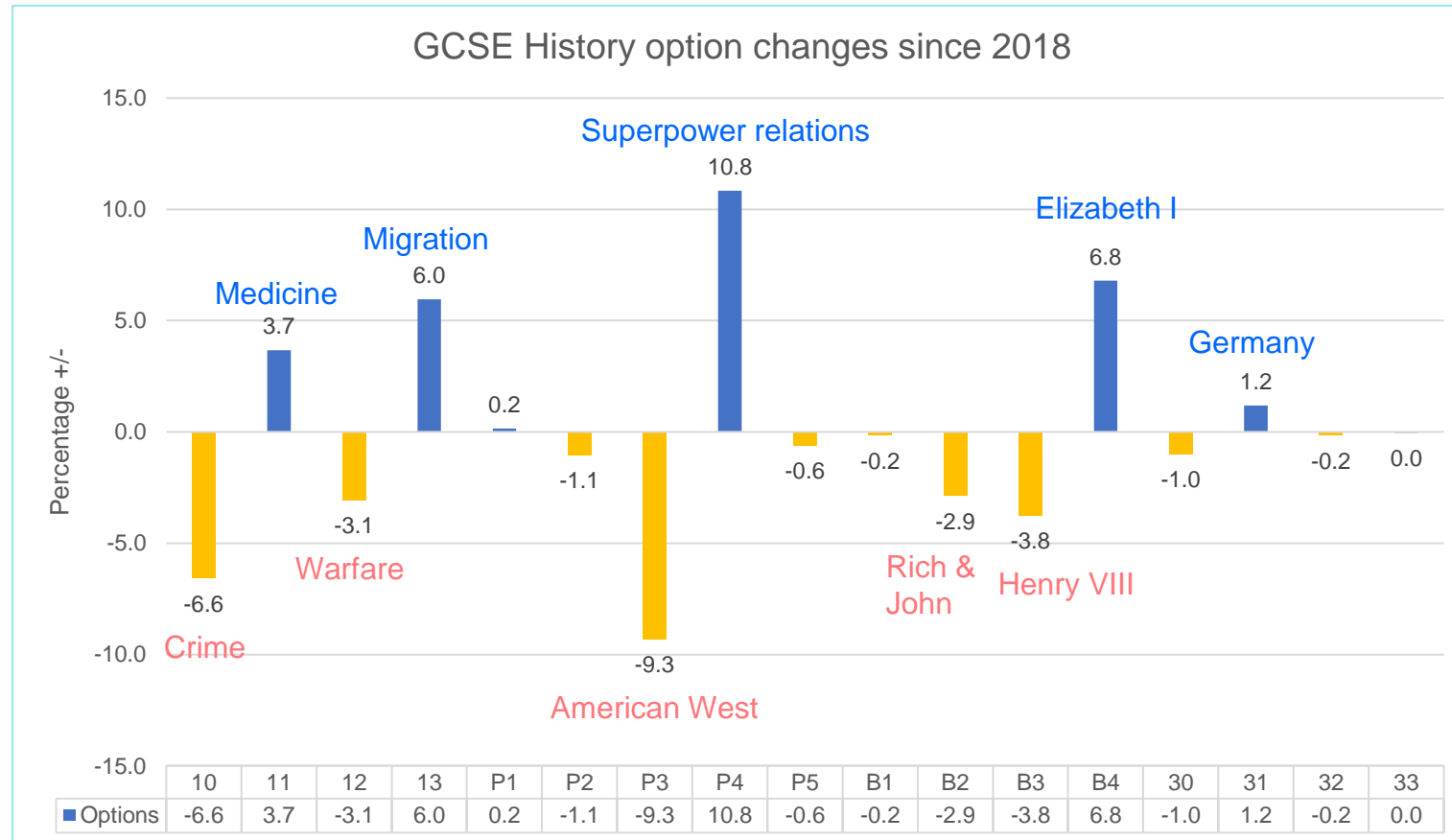
- **Superpower relations** and **American West** account for 97% of Period study entries.

Paper 3 entries by option



- **Germany** continues to dominate.
- Germany and **The USA** together account for 96% of Modern depth study entries.

Movement between options since 2018



- Centres have gravitated towards the more popular topics since 2018, e.g., P4 Superpower relations and B4 Early Elizabethan England.

Percentage outcomes, grade boundaries and statistics



Grading outcomes in 2024

- **Grade statistics** are available on our website:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-statistics.html>

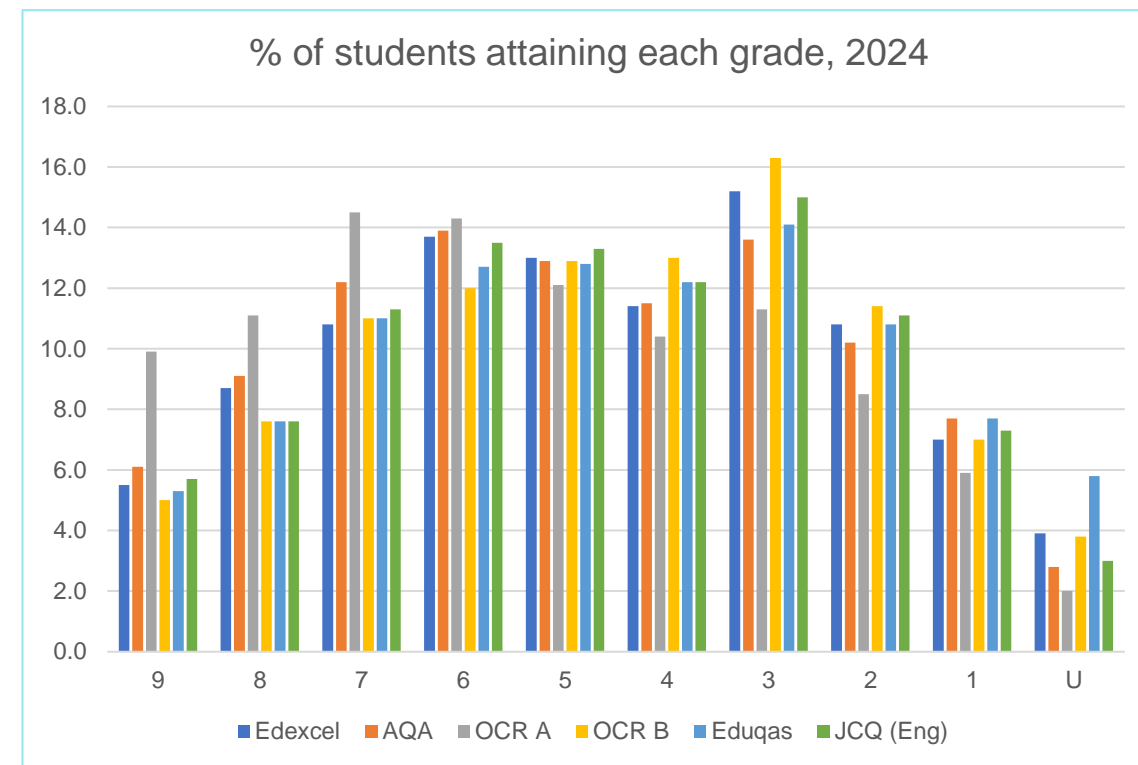
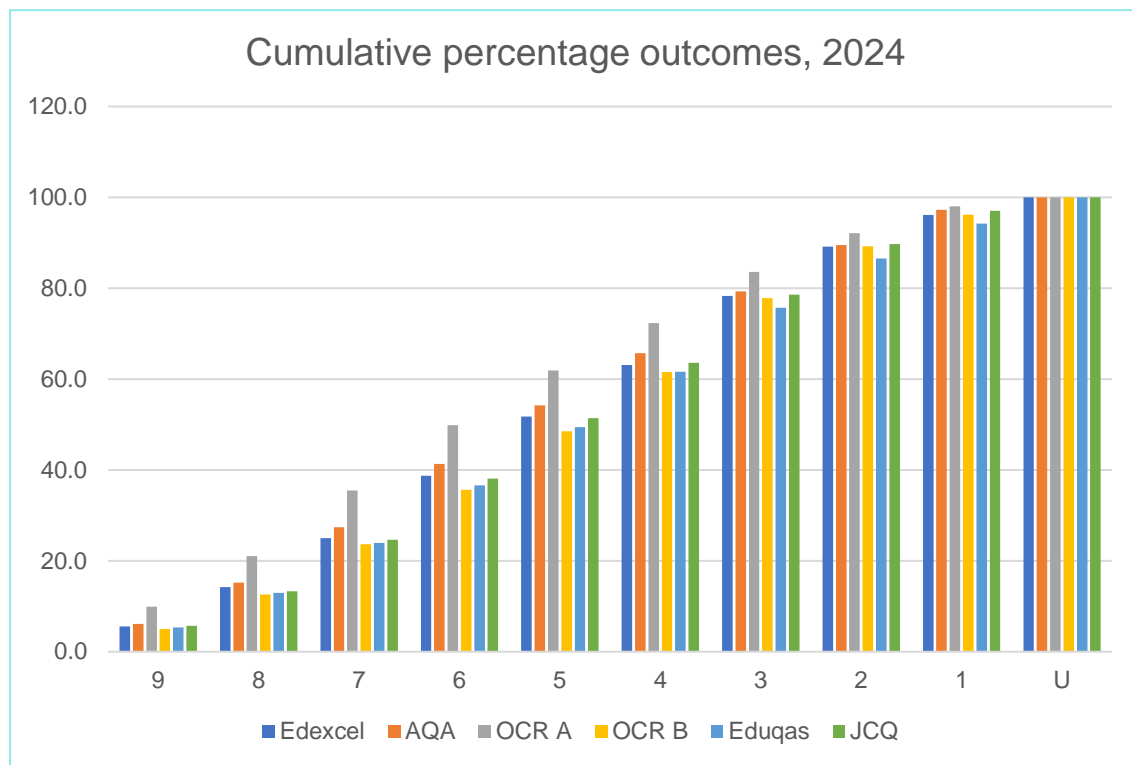
- Combined cumulative % outcomes for Edexcel GCSE History over time:

Edexcel	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
2018	4.8	13.2	23.9	37.4	51.0	63.1	78.3	89.9	97.3	100.0
2019	4.8	12.7	23.4	36.7	50.1	62.3	77.4	89.0	96.8	100.0
2020	6.6	15.9	28.1	42.8	57.8	73.4	86.6	94.6	99.0	100.0
2021(A)	6.8	16.6	29.3	44.6	59.9	74.6	86.9	94.5	98.5	100.0
2021(B)	9.1	20.8	34.2	48.9	63.1	76.5	87.2	94.6	98.4	100.0
2021	7.3	17.4	30.3	45.4	60.6	75.0	87.0	94.6	98.5	100.0
2022(A)	6.8	15.8	27.7	42.1	56.6	69.2	83.5	92.7	97.8	100.0
2022(B)	11.0	21.9	33.6	48.2	61.5	72.8	83.7	92.0	97.2	100.0
2022	7.5	16.9	28.7	43.2	57.5	69.8	83.5	92.5	97.7	100.0
2023	5.3	14.0	24.9	38.1	51.0	62.8	77.6	88.9	96.7	100.0
2024	5.5	14.2	25.0	38.7	51.7	63.1	78.3	89.1	96.1	100.0

- This shows the return to pre-pandemic grading outcomes.
- Edexcel awarded slightly more at grade 7–9 compared to 2018–19 – this was in line with technical and statistical data – the cohort was slightly more able at the top end.

Grading outcomes in 2024

The graphs show the cumulative outcomes (left) and outcomes by grade (right) for all boards in England.



Grade boundaries in 2024

- You can find grade boundaries on our website:
<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html>
- Subject-level grade boundaries** are available for each possible combination of topics available.
- This means we can adjust for any difference in level of demand on different options and award grades more accurately to reflect student performance, for example:

History													
Overall grade boundaries		Max Mark	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U	
1HI0	History Paper(s) 10 2A 30	Subject 168	145	133	121	108	95	82	61	40	19	0	
1HI0	History Paper(s) 10 2B 30	Subject 168	146	134	122	109	96	84	63	42	21	0	
1HI0	History Paper(s) 10 2C 30	Subject 168	145	133	121	108	96	84	62	40	18	0	

- Notional paper-level grade boundaries** are also available for each paper.
- Paper 2 codes are available via the subject page ([here](#)), where we have also provided estimated notional grade boundaries for each individual topic (e.g. American West).

Grade boundaries in 2024

- This Summer's question papers were found to be **more accessible to students**, particularly at grade 4. Mean marks were up across several options compared to Summer 2023.
- When viewing grade boundaries from this summer, teachers may therefore notice that some grade boundaries are higher in Summer 2024 compared to last year.
- It is important to understand that increased grade boundaries mean that **students have been able to access more of the marks on a paper**.
- These tables show estimated average grade boundaries at key grade points for selected exam boards.

Grade boundaries - raw marks converted to percentages														
Edexcel	9	7	4	1	AQA	9	7	4	1	OCR B	9	7	4	1
2019	82%	67%	42%	8%	2019	69%	55%	35%	5%	2019	82%	67%	46%	9%
2022	81%	66%	41%	9%	2022	70%	56%	33%	8%	2022	78%	63%	40%	11%
2023	85%	69%	44%	8%	2023	70%	56%	33%	6%	2023	77%	60%	37%	6%
2024	87%	73%	48%	11%	2024	70%	56%	34%	5%	2024	73%	56%	36%	7%

- Grade boundaries can vary each year depending on how question papers perform.

Mean mark trends in 2024

- The table below shows mean marks on the most popular options on Papers 1 and 3 (the 52-mark papers). The global averages were all up in 2024 compared to 2023, reflecting the improvements made to the student experience. Lower-attaining students find Paper 1 particularly accessible.

Paper 1 and Paper 3 Option (year) / 52 marks	Global avge	Grade 9 est. avge	Grade 7 est. avge	Grade 4 est. avge	Grade 1 est. avge
Crime (2023)	27.92	45.4	37.2	26.9	12.2
Crime (2024)	30.35	46.8	39.4	29.8	13.9
Medicine (2023)	28.88	45.9	37.9	27.6	13.7
Medicine (2024)	30.29	46.9	40.2	29.8	12.9
Germany (2023)	25.79	45.9	36.5	24.2	6.7
Germany (2024)	29.56	47.0	40.0	28.8	9.4
USA (2023)	27.58	46.0	37.8	26.4	7.0
USA (2024)	29.16	46.4	39.1	28.3	10.3

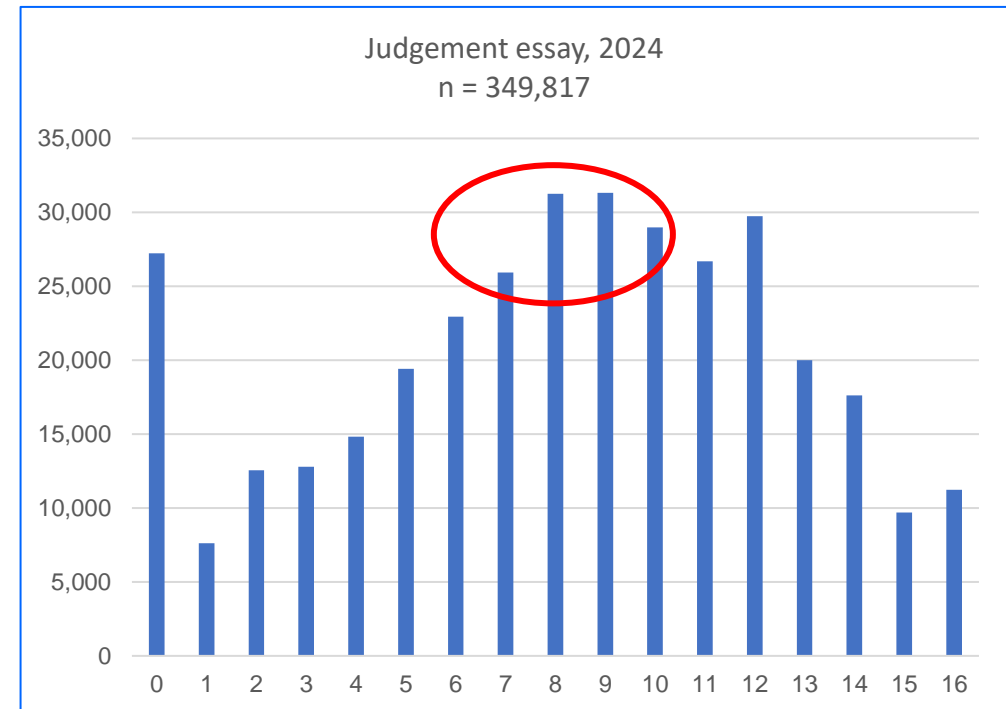
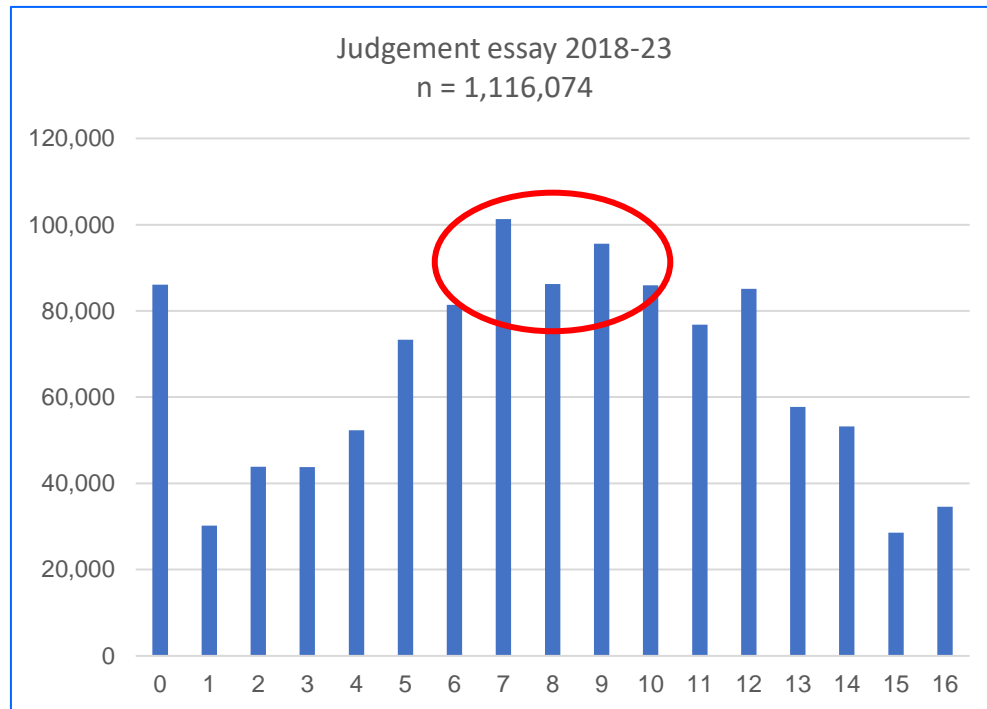
Mean mark trends in 2024

- The table below shows estimated mean marks on the most popular options on Papers 2B and 2P (the 32-mark components). Generally, students perform slightly better on the British depth than the Period study.
- American West students found the paper this summer much more accessible, but many lower-attaining Superpower relations students found theirs more challenging and we'll review this carefully.

Paper 2 Option (year) / 32 marks	Global avge	Grade 9 est. avge	Grade 7 est. avge	Grade 4 est. avge	Grade 1 est. avge
A-S & Normans (2023)	15.04	28.6	23.0	14.0	3.2
A-S & Normans (2024)	16.21	28.6	23.7	15.6	4.2
Elizabeth (2023)	16.58	28.8	23.9	15.6	3.7
Elizabeth (2024)	16.18	27.7	22.7	15.4	4.6
American West 2023)	14.57	28.5	22.5	13.4	2.7
American West (2024)	17.52	29.5	25.0	16.9	4.7
Superpower relations (2023)	14.78	29.9	24.5	12.1	0.9
Superpower relations (2024)	13.71	29.6	23.2	10.7	0.9

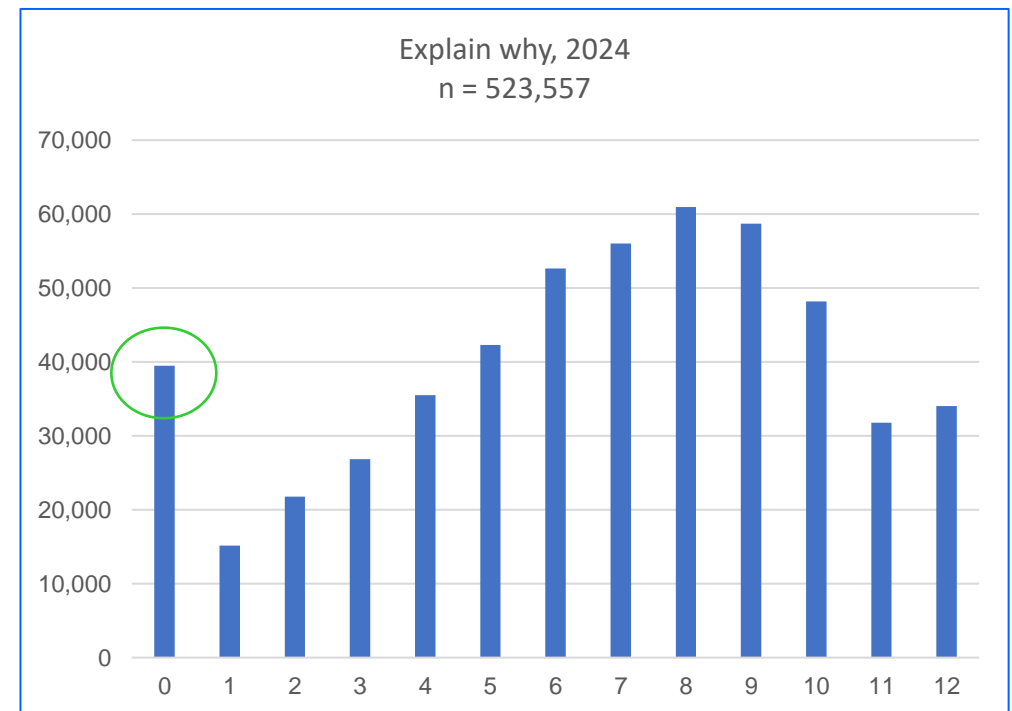
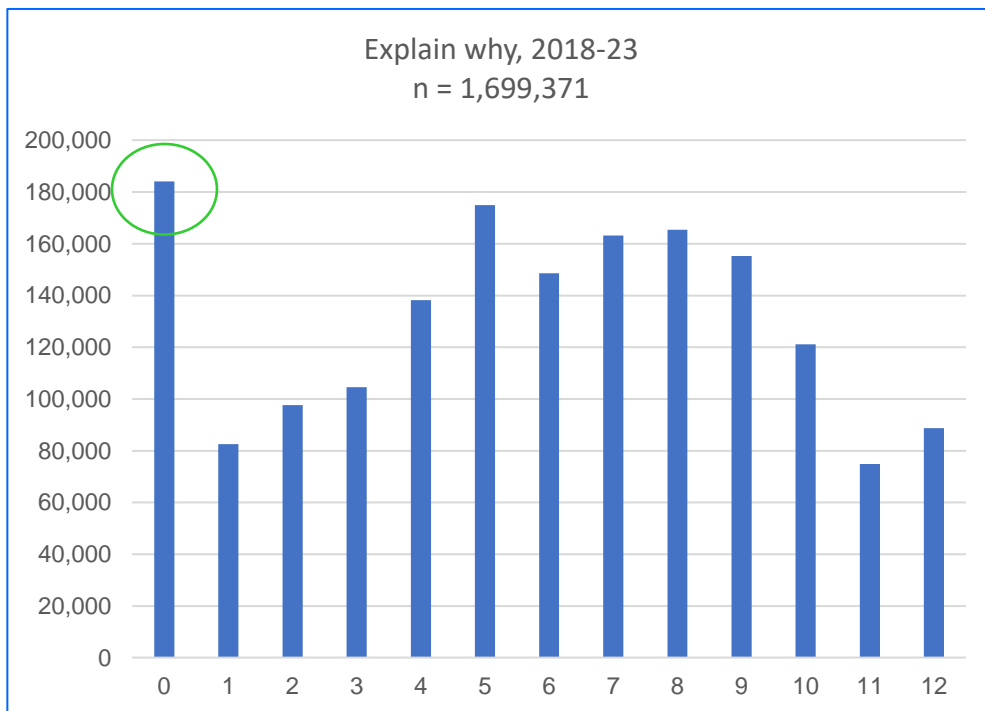
Mark distribution in 2024 – removal of Level 2 stimulus cap

- The bar charts below exemplify the impact of removing the stimulus cap at the top of Level 2:



Mark distribution in 2024 – zero marks

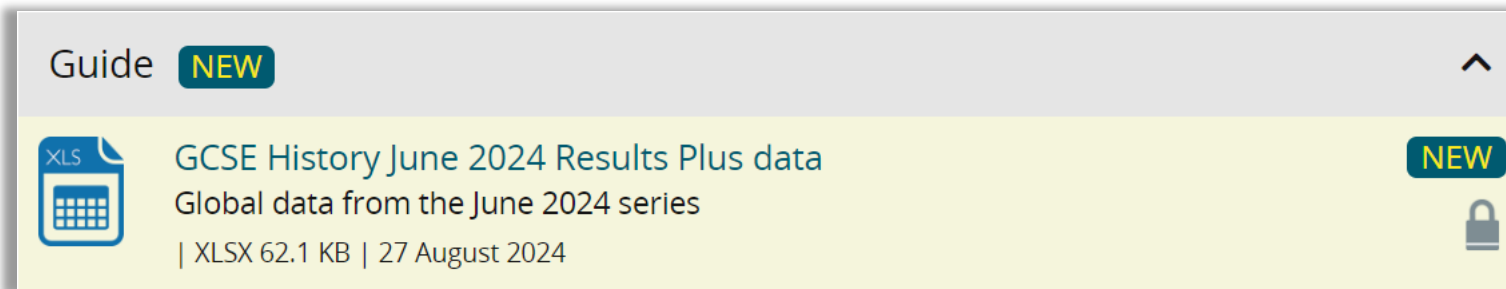
- There was some reduction in the proportion of students being awarded zero marks across a range of questions in 2024 compared to previous series.
- The bar charts show the 12-mark Explain why questions: **11% in 2018–23 vs 7% in 2024.**



ResultsPlus and Access to Scripts



- **ResultsPlus** is our free results analysis tool which lets you analyse your students' results from the summer series: <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/Services/ResultsPlus.html>
- Use your [Edexcel Online](#) account to log in – ask your Exams Officer to grant you ResultsPlus access if you don't currently have it.
- We create a **global data** spreadsheet for each series with the data tidied up. Look under the Guide dropdown on the GCSE History [Teaching and learning materials](#) tab.



- Use our **free Access to Scripts service** to view your students' marked exam scripts: <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/Services/access-to-scripts.html>
- The service is available from results day until **13 December 2024**.
- This [case study](#) with a GCSE History centre offers ways you can use Access to Scripts.

Senior Examiner feedback, May/June 2024 exam series



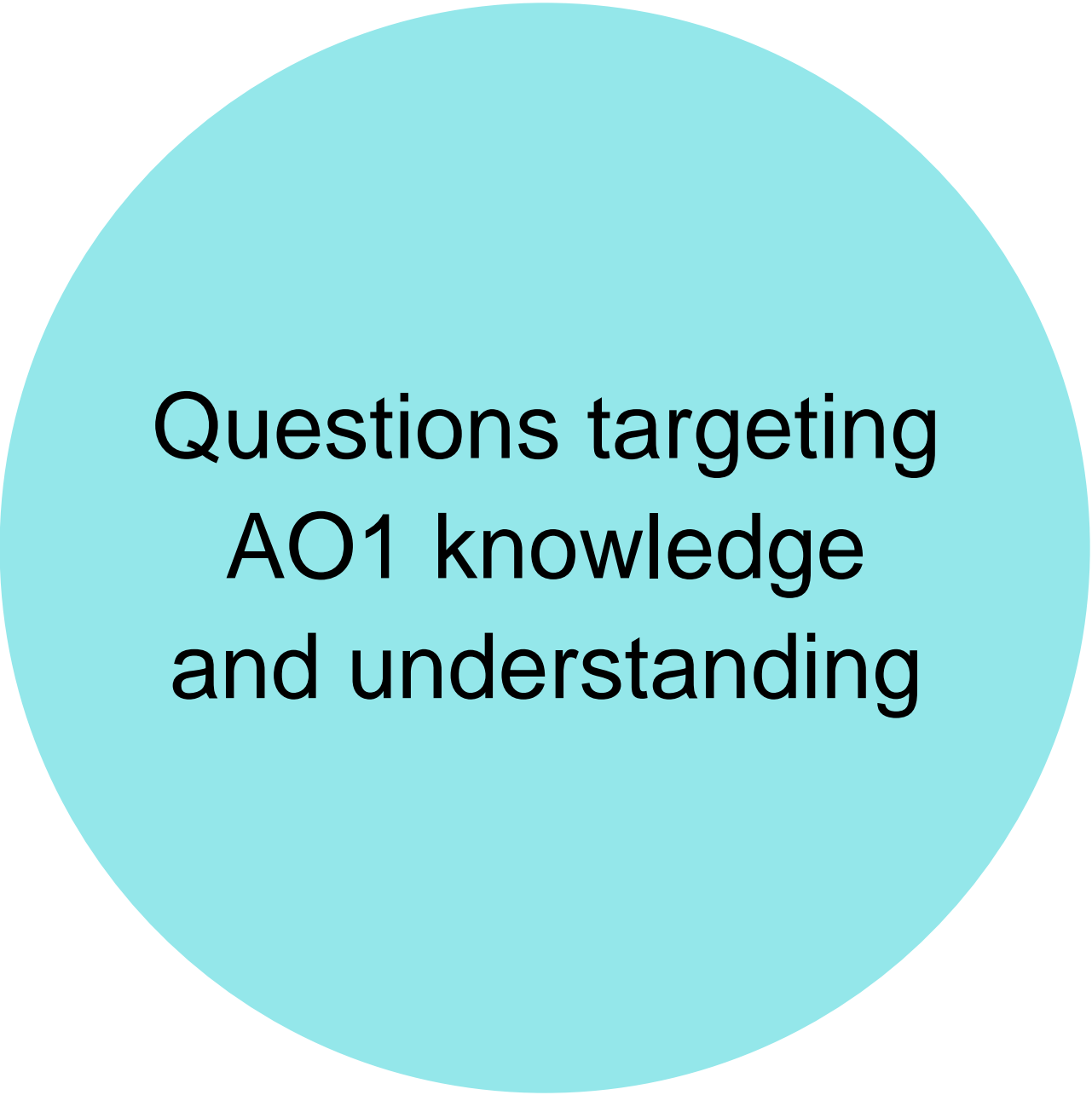
Delegate booklet / Principal Examiner Reports

- Most of the exemplars in this presentation are extracts; they're provided in full in the delegate booklet.
- They are all 'new' exemplars, i.e. not taken from the Principal Examiner Reports.
- There isn't time in this session to provide exemplars from all 17 available options, but most have at least one exemplar included in this insights event.
- Please refer to the relevant reports ([here](#)), where there are exemplar student answers with examiner comments for every question on every option.

The screenshot displays the 'Exam materials (351)' section of the Edexcel Online portal. On the left, there are filters for 'CATEGORIES' and 'CONTENT TYPE'. Under 'CATEGORIES', 'Exam materials (351)' is selected. Under 'CONTENT TYPE', 'All' is selected. The main area shows a list of exam materials for 'June 2024', which is marked as 'NEW'. Two items are visible: 'Examiner report - Option 10 - June 2024' (Option 10 - Crime and Punishment, PDF 3.1 MB, 27 August 2024) and 'Examiner report - Option 11 - June 2024' (Option 11 - Medicine in Britain, PDF 2.9 MB, 27 August 2024). Both items are marked as 'NEW' and have a padlock icon, indicating they are locked. An 'EXPAND ALL' link is visible in the top right corner of the list area.

Exam materials (351)		SORT BY	
		Exam Series	
EXPAND ALL			
June 2024 NEW			
	Examiner report - Option 10 - June 2024 Option 10 - Crime and Punishment PDF 3.1 MB 27 August 2024	NEW	
	Examiner report - Option 11 - June 2024 Option 11 - Medicine in Britain PDF 2.9 MB 27 August 2024	NEW	

- The PE reports are padlocked for one year – use your [Edexcel Online](#) login account to access them.



Questions targeting
AO1 knowledge
and understanding

Key features – knowledge and understanding

- The 'Describe two key features' question is worth 4 marks. It assesses AO1 knowledge and understanding on its own.
- It appears in two places: Paper 1 Historic Environment Q1 and Paper 2 British depth study Q1a.
- It is a points-based mark scheme: 1 mark for the feature that is identified and 1 mark for additional information.
- Students should ensure that the additional information they provide is linked to the feature they have identified.
- The focus can be drawn from any part of the specification, so candidates should have some knowledge about all key topics.
- These questions were generally well done. Few answers took more than the allocated answer space.

Centres are reminded that, from 2025 onwards, Question 1 on both these papers will ask for one key feature on each of two topics (Q1a and Q1b).

Key features – exemplar answer 1

1 Describe **two** features of the new techniques used in the treatment of wounds on the Western Front. 4 Q01

Feature 1

One feature was the Carrel-Dakin method. This included putting salt solution on wounds to prevent infection. This helped to reduce the number of soldiers dying from infection.

Feature 2

Another key feature was wound excision. This was when damaged infected or dead tissues were cut from a wound. This was to prevent further infections and the wound was stitched up after the process.

The **first feature** names the Carrel-Dakin method as a new way of treating wounds and provides information about what this involves.

The **second feature** names wound excision as a new method of treating wounds and also provides additional information.

Both are valid points with accurate and relevant supporting detail, so this answer scores **4 marks**.

Key features – exemplar answer 2

1 (a) Describe **two** features of education in early Elizabethan England.

(4) 2 Q01a

Feature 1

Education was based on gender.
Boys got a better education
than girls no matter the
~~class~~ social class.

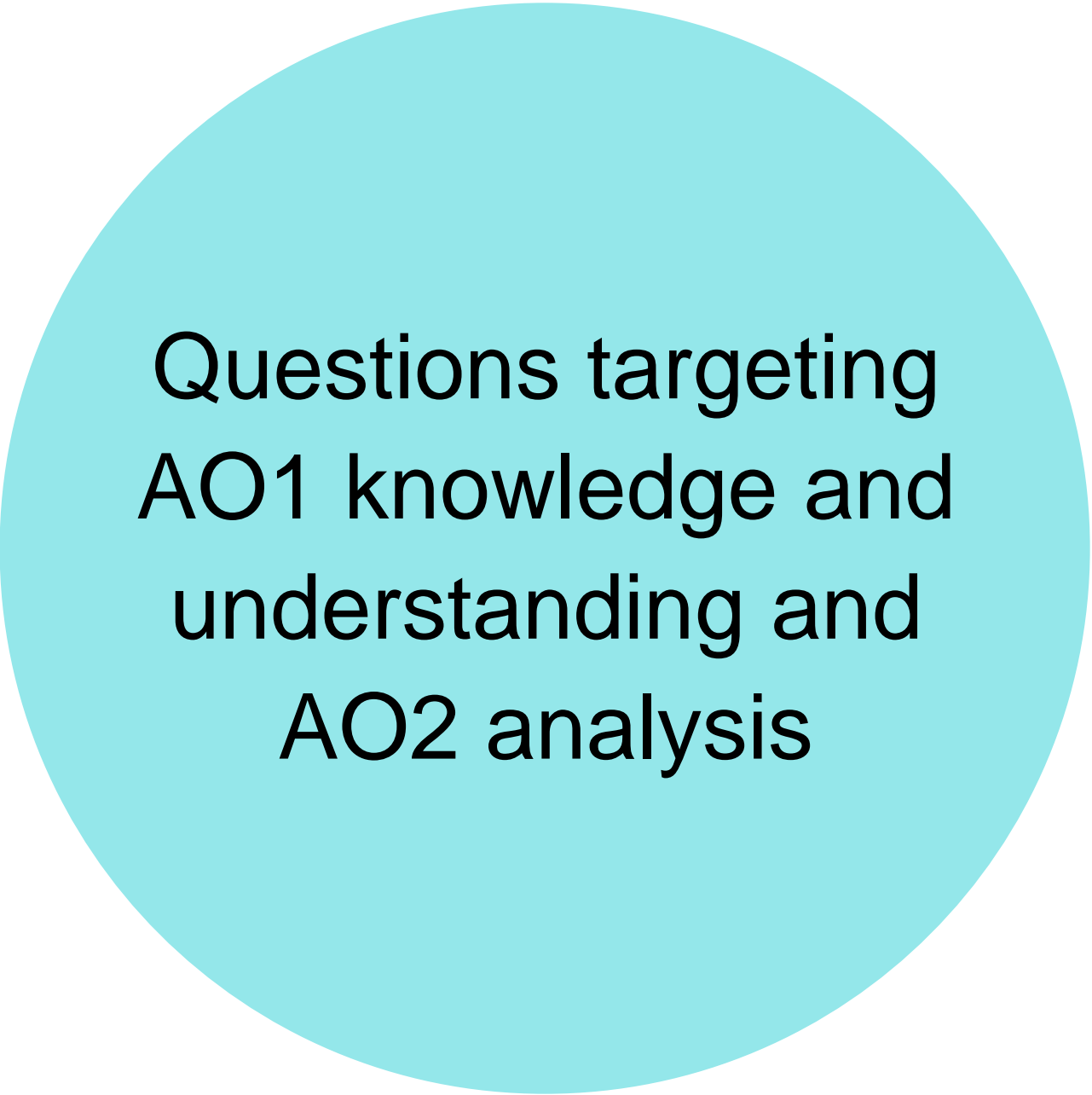
Feature 2

Elizabeth was very educated in
different ~~languages~~ languages.

The **first feature** identifies a valid aspect of education – that it was dependent on gender. Some additional information is added, that boys always received a better education.

The second feature is about Queen Elizabeth; it is not a feature of education in early Elizabethan England.

This answer received **2 marks**.



Questions targeting
AO1 knowledge and
understanding and
AO2 analysis

Explain why – causation

- The ‘Explain why’ causation question is worth 12 marks, and assesses AO1 knowledge and understanding, and AO2 analysis.
- ‘Explain why’ appears in three places: Paper 1 Q4, Paper 2B Q1b (*Q2 from 2025*), and Paper 3 Q2.
- The mark scheme weights the two AOs equally.
- Students do not need to use the stimulus points, but they are intended to indicate aspects of content that could be included. The cap at the top of Level 2 has been removed, but it still applies at the top of Level 3 and for access to Level 4. This cap requires high-level answers to cover three aspects of content. Notice that an aspect of content is not the same as a cause or factor.
- There were few blank answers or Level 1 responses, with many students reaching Level 2 by showing good knowledge of the topic, even if there was limited analysis.
- Examiner reports say that students have shown confidence in structuring their answers, and a pleasing number of answers reached Level 3 or Level 4, demonstrating good analysis, with a clear focus on the question and supported by good knowledge.

Centres are reminded that, from 2025 onwards, students will be given a choice of two Explain why questions on Paper 3 options (Russia, Germany, China, USA): Q2a or Q2b.

Judgement essays – second-order concepts

- The 'Judgement essay' question is worth 16 marks, and assesses AO1 knowledge and understanding, and AO2 analysis with evaluation. It appears in two places: Paper 1 Q5/6, and Paper 2B Q1ci/ii (*Q3/4 from 2025*). The mark scheme is identical to that for the 12-mark question but with an additional 4 marks available in AO2 for judgement.
- The second-order concept(s) assessed in any question may be: causation, consequence, change, change and continuity, similarity and difference, and significance.
- The question asks students 'how far' they agree with the statement in the question. In order to make a judgement, students need to evaluate the statement by considering the evidence for and against it; even if they agree completely, they should consider points against it or other possible views and explain why they do not agree with the alternative.
- A common approach is to examine one side of the issue, then the other, and to make a judgement in the final paragraph. However, in the best answers, the judgement runs throughout the answer, shown through comments such as 'the most important aspect...', 'strong evidence for...', 'less significant...', etc.
- The points made about performance in answers to the 12-mark causation questions also apply here.
- The following extracts illustrate the strengths and weaknesses of answers seen this year. They have been annotated; the full answers are in the delegate booklet so that you can study them at a later point.

Judgement essays – mark scheme

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
1	1–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A simple or <u>generalised answer is given</u>, lacking development and organisation. [AO2] <u>Limited knowledge and understanding</u> of the topic is shown. [AO1] The overall judgement is <u>missing or asserted</u>. [AO2]
2	5–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An explanation is given showing <u>limited analysis</u> and with <u>implicit or unsustained links to the conceptual focus of the question</u>. It shows <u>some development and organisation of material</u>, but a <u>line of reasoning is not sustained</u>. [AO2] Accurate and relevant information is included, showing <u>some knowledge and understanding</u> of the period. [AO1] The overall judgement is given but its justification is <u>asserted or insecure</u>. [AO2]
3	9–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An explanation is given, showing <u>some analysis</u>, which is <u>mainly directed at the conceptual focus of the question</u>. It shows <u>a line of reasoning that is generally sustained</u>, although some passages may lack coherence and organisation. [AO2] Accurate and relevant information is included, showing <u>good knowledge and understanding</u> of the required features or characteristics of the period studied. [AO1] The overall judgement is given with <u>some justification</u>, but some criteria selected for the required judgement are left implicit or not validly applied. [AO2] <p><i>Maximum 11 marks for Level 3 answers that do not address three or more aspects of content.</i></p>
4	13–16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An analytical explanation is given which is <u>directed consistently at the conceptual focus of the question</u>, showing <u>a line of reasoning that is coherent, sustained and logically structured</u>. [AO2] Accurate and relevant information is precisely selected to address the question directly, showing <u>wide-ranging knowledge and understanding</u> of the required features or characteristics of the period studied. [AO1] Criteria for the required judgement are <u>justified and applied in the process of reaching the overall judgement</u>. [AO2] <p><i>No access to Level 4 for answers that do not address three or more aspects of content.</i></p>

Judgement essays – exemplar answer 3

5 'In the period c800–c1500, the most important impact made by migrants in England was on the development of trade.'

How far do you agree? Explain your answer.

(16)

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

- the Viking city of York
- Norman castles and churches

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

(Total for spelling, punctuation, grammar and use of specialist terminology = 4 marks)

(Total for Question 5 = 20 marks)

This Migration question asks whether the development of trade was the most important impact made by migrants in England in the years c800–c1500.

The stimulus point of 'the Viking city of York' reminds candidates of an aspect of content that could be used to discuss trade, while the other stimulus point of 'Norman castles and churches' suggests an alternative impact on the built environment.

Judgement essays – exemplar answer 3 (extract)

Chosen question number: Question 5 ☒ Question 6 ☒ 16 SecB
4 SBSPAC

Some historians may agree that from 800-1500, the largest impact made by migrants was trade. During this medieval period, Britain ~~was~~ ^{became} began to be one of Europe's centres of trade, which held an extremely lasting impact over all workers, merchants and especially those in power as it completely boosted the British economy. An example of an impact onto trade was the Viking trade routes that opened up, stemming from the Danelaw. The Viking city of York was found to have traders from across the world as trade routes had opened up as far as Constantinople. This impact was extremely ^{lasting} ~~lasting~~ as the Scandinavian and European trade routes lasted for centuries. The

AO2 Level 4 analysis showing the impact on trade but also incorporating judgement that this was significant as it affected various groups in society and was long-lasting.

AO1 precise detail. This, and the rest of the answer, is Level 4.

The answer received **16 marks** (with an additional 4 marks for SPaG).

Judgement essays – exemplar answer 4

(c) (i) 'The most significant challenge to Elizabeth I's religious settlement, in the years 1558–68, came from English Catholics.'

How far do you agree? Explain your answer.

(16)

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

- recusancy fines for not attending church
- the Puritan campaign against crucifixes

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

This Early Elizabethan England question asks whether the most significant challenge to Elizabeth I's religious settlement, in the years 1558–68, was from English Catholics.

The stimulus point of 'recusancy fines for not attending church' indicates a challenge from Catholics to the religious settlement, and the second stimulus point indicates an alternative group that challenged it.

Judgement essays – exemplar answer 4 (extract)

Chosen question number: Question 1(c)(i) ☒ Question 1(c)(ii) ☒

On the one hand, I agree with the statement. This is because the Catholics caused a lot of disagreement with the religious settlement. The Catholics believed that the Pope in Rome had supreme authority and not Elizabeth. Elizabeth created the Act of Supremacy which made her the Supreme Governor of the Church taking power away from the Pope. The Catholics believed that the Pope, bishops and archbishops were the ones who controlled the church and therefore didn't want Elizabeth to control it. Furthermore, many Catholics refused to attend church services, ^{which led to recusancy} This was due to the Act of Uniformity which stated that every church in England

This identifies a reason why Catholics might challenge Elizabeth's religious settlement. There is limited and implicit analysis, which begins to explain the Catholic challenge to the religious settlement, but it is not explaining the nature of that challenge or assessing how significant that challenge was.

AO2 Level 2.

There is a description of the situation of Catholics in England at the time of Elizabeth's religious settlement. It is mainly accurate and has some relevance to the topic but lacks focus and precise details. AO1 Level 2.

This answer was awarded **8 marks**.

Similarity and difference

- Question 3 in the Thematic Study always asks students to identify a similarity or a difference between two different periods.
- The clearest answers state the similarity/difference at the start of the answer and then provide details from **each** period to support the statement.
- It is not enough to provide details from one period and say the other was similar (or different); the similarity (or difference) needs to be demonstrated.
- Most candidates provide supporting details from each period when they are asked about a difference, but they often fail to do so when asked about a similarity and this limits the rewardable content.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Simple or generalised comment is offered about a difference. [AO2]• Generalised information about the topic is included, showing limited knowledge and understanding of the periods. [AO1]
2	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Features of the period are analysed to explain a difference. [AO2]• Specific information about the topic is added to support the comparison, showing good knowledge and understanding of the periods. [AO1]

Similarity and difference – exemplar answer 5

3 Explain **one** way in which the treatment of the crime of witchcraft in the years c1500–c1700 was **different** from the treatment of the crime of witchcraft in the years c1700–c1900.

During the years 1500-1700 the treatment of the crimes of witchcraft (accused of being associated with the devil) was treated as a major crime and resulted in hanging. This is because religion was highly believed in and James I released a book called ~~Dea~~ Daemonologie which influenced his paranoia on others.

However, in years ~~th~~ 1700-1900 the punishment for witchcraft changed to a simple fine. This is because science was becoming more understood and discovered so the belief decreased from society.

(Total for Question 3 = 4 marks)

The difference between the treatment of witchcraft in the two periods is clear – it has changed from witchcraft being punished by death to a simple fine. AO2 Level 2.

Additional detail is provided to explain why witchcraft was punished so severely in the earlier period and less severely in the later period. AO1 Level 2.

This answer received **4 marks**.

Similarity and difference – exemplar answer 6

3 Explain **one** way in which fighting in the Battle of Waterloo (1815) was **different** from fighting in the Iraq War (2003).

Technology wasn't as advanced.
Therefore, weapons in 1815 would have
been much more simple and not as
threatening. Where as, in 2003 weapons
and bombs and planes etc were much
more advanced so this means they
could cause more damage and be more
destructable.

(Total for Question 3 = 4 marks)

A difference between the fighting in the two case studies is implied by the comparison between the weapons. However, it is not clear whether the comparison is between the level of technology or the weapons and their destructive power. Furthermore, neither of these points is explicit about the fighting. AO2 Level 1.

There is a brief reference to specific weapons used at the Battle of Waterloo and in the Iraq War. AO1 remains at Level 1, as there are no details about fighting at Waterloo.

This answer received **2 marks**.

Thematic study – key takeaways

- The Thematic studies focus on change and continuity over broad periods of time. This involves ideas such as progress and stagnation but also concepts such as causation, consequence, and significance.
- Generally, students were well prepared for this paper both in terms of knowledge and in knowing what each question expects. However, students sometimes limit the relevance of their responses by writing about events outside the period in the question.
- It is essential that students recognise terms such as medieval or modern (1900–present in the specification) and understand centuries (e.g., that the nineteenth century means dates from 1800–1899).
- They should be aware of the key themes running throughout the specification, e.g., ideas about the cause of disease (Medicine), and key factors such as the role of government in all four options.
- Each option has key ideas, such as developments in law enforcement (Crime), the difference between prevention and treatment (Medicine), the composition of the army (Warfare), and the impact of migrants (Migration).

Medicine, 2024	Global avge	Grade 9 avge	Grade 7 avge	Grade 4 avge	Grade 1 avge
Q3 similarity/difference (4m)	2.58	3.55	3.16	2.60	1.41
Q4 explain why (12m)	7.15	10.99	9.57	7.26	2.32
Q5 judgement essay (16m)	9.16	14.59	12.45	8.54	2.57
Q6 judgement essay (16m)	9.32	14.51	12.15	8.81	3.34

Period study – Q1 consequence

- All the questions in the Period study look at aspects of consequence.
- In Question 1, students are asked to identify two consequences of an event or development.
- It is important to recognise that a consequence is something that happened as a result of an event or development, not simply something that happened afterwards.
- Answers here need to explain that link, as well as providing relevant supporting details.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Simple or generalised comment is offered about a consequence. [AO2]• Generalised information about the topic is included, showing limited knowledge and understanding of the period. [AO1]
2	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Features of the period are analysed to explain a consequence. [AO2]• Specific information about the topic is added to support the explanation, showing good knowledge and understanding of the period. [AO1]

Centres are reminded that, from 2025 onwards, Question 1 of the Period study will ask for one consequence on each of two topics (Q1a and Q1b).

Q1 Consequence – exemplar answer 7 (extract)

1 Explain **two** consequences of President Sadat of Egypt's visit to Israel (1977).

Consequence 1:

One consequence of President Sadat of Egypt's visit to Israel was the beginning of the Camp David Accords ⁽¹⁹⁷⁸⁾. For example, Egypt and Israel sought to make peace and US president Carter capitalised on this ~~at~~ ^{by} ~~inviting~~ Sadat and Begin to Camp David. By creating a friendly atmosphere, the Accords were agreed as Israel gave up claims on Sinai in exchange for peace ('trading land for peace'), the 'Bar Lev Line' was to be taken down with US aid of \$3 billion and \$1 billion every year for 10 years for restoration of Egypt. This resulted in Sadat and Begin winning a Nobel peace prize, for making peace. The Suez Canal and Straits of Tiran were opened for Israel.

The answer explains how President Sadat's visit to Israel led to a series of events which all improved relations between Egypt and Israel. AO2 Level 2.

The details of each stage of improved relations and what the two sides agreed, are used to support the analysis. AO1 Level 2.

This answer received **4 marks**.

Period study – Q2 narrative analysis

- This is Question 2 on the Period study paper. Answers should produce a narrative of events or developments with an analysis which shows how they collectively led to an outcome.
- Therefore, key elements here are the **links** between the separate points, and the sense that events or developments culminated in the end result.
- Stimulus points can indicate a starting point, a key event or an end point. As with other stimulus points, candidates do not need to use them but again there is the expectation at the highest level that three aspects of content will be covered.
- Problems arise because candidates do not always recognise the dates in the question and write outside the date range.
- Also, some candidates treat this as an analytical question and write three, unconnected paragraphs, discussing factors or events.

Narrative analysis, 2024	Global avge	Grade 9 avge	Grade 7 avge	Grade 4 avge	Grade 1 avge
American West (8m)	4.41	7.34	6.34	4.35	0.96
Superpower relations (8m)	3.60	7.52	6.01	2.92	0.24

Period study – Q2 narrative analysis mark scheme

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A simple or generalised narrative is provided; the account shows limited analysis and organisation of the events included. [AO2]• Limited knowledge and understanding of the events is shown. [AO1]
2	3–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A narrative is given, showing some organisation of material into a sequence of events leading to an outcome. The account of events shows some analysis of the linkage between them, but some passages of the narrative may lack coherence and organisation. [AO2]• Accurate and relevant information is added, showing some knowledge and understanding of the events. [AO1]
3	6–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A narrative is given which organises material into a clear sequence of events leading to an outcome. The account of events analyses the linkage between them and is coherent and logically structured. [AO2]• Accurate and relevant information is included, showing good knowledge and understanding of the key features or characteristics of the events. [AO1] <p><i>No access to Level 3 for answers that do not address three or more aspects of content.</i></p>

Q2 Narrative analysis – exemplar answer 8 (extract)

- 2 Write a narrative account analysing the key events of the collapse of Soviet control of Eastern Europe in the years 1985–91.

(8)

Initially, Gorbachev's new thinking of 1987, marked the beginning of a relaxation of Soviet control of communism as well as the extent of Soviet control in Eastern Europe. Gorbachev's new thinking consisted of 2 main policies: Glasnost (openness) and Perestroika (restructuring). Glasnost focused upon the relaxation of censorship and allowing people more social freedoms whereas ~~Glasnost~~ ^{Perestroika} was focused upon introducing more capitalist elements into the USSR (for example allowing private business' and relaxing restrictions on foreign trade). This new thinking showed the world (and the Eastern Block) that the USSR was relaxing its control and ultimately gave the Eastern Block a hope of leaving the Soviet sphere of influence (as Soviet economic weakness was so obvious). This was emphasised by Gorbachev speaking at the UN in 1988, where he apologised for Soviet repression.

Using words like 'initially' and including the date of Gorbachev speaking at the UN creates a clear sense of chronology. The phrase 'the new thinking showed the world' also indicates how one event led to another.

The next section of the answer begins, 'This new thinking led to a series of conferences...' and the final section starts, 'Lastly, in 1991...' showing that the narrative covers the whole period. AO2 Level 3.

Details of Gorbachev's policies provide support for the explanation of how events unfolded. This, and the rest of the answer, is AO1 Level 3.

This answer received **8 marks**.

Q2 Narrative analysis – exemplar answer 9 (extract)

2 Write a narrative account analysing the key events of the Spanish conquest of the Incas (1530–37).

(8)

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

- Atahualpa
- the siege of Cuzco (1536–37)

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

- In 1530 Pizarro entered ~~at~~ Atahualpa's land and tried showing his ~~to~~ ~~sketches~~. He went to try take over and to spread Christianity but due to everyone being under ~~at~~ Atahualpa's command, they didn't listen to him. Then at one point Pizarro locked Atahualpa in a room and demanded for God Child. Once that was done he killed Atahualpa to show the ~~people~~ Incas how much power ~~he~~ he held.

This shows a sense of narrative with basic chronology.

This is AO2 Level 2.

The supporting detail is generalised but mainly correct.

This, and the rest of the answer, is AO1, Level 2.

This answer received **4 marks**.

Period study – Q3 importance of X for Y

- All the Period study questions focus on an aspect of consequence or include aspects of the aftermath of events or developments. Question 3 assesses an understanding of the impact of an event or development – what difference did it make.
- However, the question is not about the general importance of the event or development. The question is tightly focused, asking about its impact on another event, development or aspect of society. For convenience sake, this can be summarised as ‘the importance of X for Y’.
- Explaining what difference X **made to Y** is a key way to achieve Level 3. Answers which simply explain X’s importance will not progress beyond Level 2.
- However, answers which offer detailed discussions of Y are also not recognising the focus of the question. The points being made about what or how much Y changed must be shown to be a result of X.
- It should also be noted that sometimes a valid answer is that X had little or negative effect on Y, as long as this can be supported with relevant details.

Importance of x for y, 2024	Global avge	Grade 9 avge	Grade 7 avge	Grade 4 avge	Grade 1 avge
American West answer 1 (8m)	4.30	7.40	6.16	4.14	1.07
American West answer 2 (8m)	3.53	7.12	5.50	3.19	0.48

Period study – Q3 mark scheme

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A simple or generalised answer is given, showing limited development and organisation of material. [AO2]• Limited knowledge and understanding of the topic is shown. [AO1]
2	3–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An explanation is given, showing an attempt to analyse importance. It shows some reasoning, but some passages may lack coherence and organisation. [AO2]• Accurate and relevant information is added, showing some knowledge and understanding of the period. [AO1]
3	6–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An explanation is given, showing analysis of importance. It shows a line of reasoning that is coherent and logically structured. [AO2]• Accurate and relevant information is included, showing good knowledge and understanding of the required features or characteristics of the period studied. [AO1]

The following examples illustrate the strengths and weaknesses seen in answers:

- Exemplar 10 – The importance of the railroad network for the cattle industry (American West).
- Exemplar 11 – The importance of the Declaration of Independence (1776) for the revolution in the American colonies (British America).

Q3 importance – exemplar answer 10 (extract)

One reason why the railroad was important for the cattle industry was that it increased profits of cattle ranchers. After the Civil War 1861-1865, the Southern states and economy were left devastated. A cow was worth \$5 in Texas compared to \$40 in Chicago. This prompted ranchers to transport cattle to northern cities for greater profit. Before the railroad (until 1869) cattle would go on the long drive—they would physically walk from Texan ranches to northern cities. However, on this journey, cattle would lose weight and thus value. The railroad eliminated this problem, as cattle could be transported cheaply and easily, so less weight was lost and more money was gained. Therefore, this resulted in increased profits for 'cattle barons'.

This is AO2 Level 3 as it is clearly focused on the difference that railroads made to the cattle industry: increased profits.

Precise details are provided to support the analysis. AO1 Level 3.

In the second paragraph, the answer goes on to explain the importance to cattle ranchers of Abilene as a cow town.

This answer received **8 marks**.

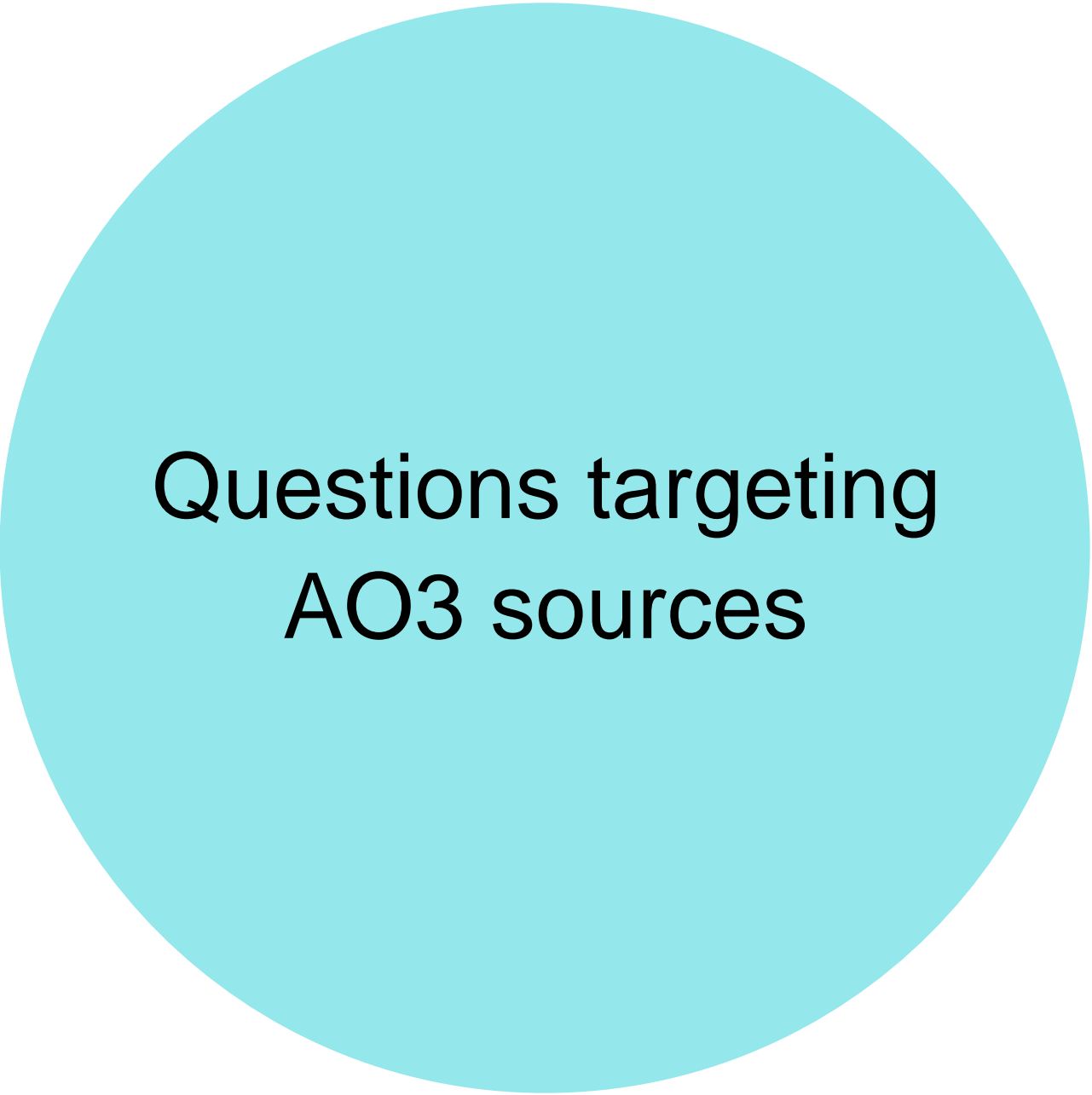
Q3 importance – exemplar answer 11 (extract)

The Declaration of Independence
was important for the revolution in
the colonies because they had
finally got their own control and
understood that they have their own
freedom and own rights. This angered
the British but the colonies
were finally starting to fight
back for example the boycotting.
The colonists boycotted the sugar,
tea, stamps all because of the taxes
Britain was making them pay even
though it never helped them and they
never saw it. The colonies started
becoming more independent which
was important for the revolution
in the colonies and that gave
them independence.

This shows some analysis of the moves to revolution and independence but there is no focus on the importance of the Declaration of Independence.
AO2 Level 2.

Valid details are provided about the situation. AO1 Level 2.

This answer received **3 marks** (low L2).



Questions targeting
AO3 sources

Source utility

- The source utility question is worth 8 marks, and assesses AO3 source evaluation.
- Source utility appears in two places: Paper 1 Historic Environment Q2a, and Paper 3 Q3a, as the first part of the enquiry package.
- The sources involved are always contemporary (primary) sources and may be written or visual.
- Many answers offer detailed comments about the source content and/or the provenance but cannot move beyond mid-Level 2 without including contextual knowledge.
- At Level 3, contextual knowledge should not be presented as additional information but integrated into other comments, for example confirming or challenging the content of the source, providing detail about the provenance to show why the date/author is significant, explaining whether a source is representative of the wider situation, etc.
- The two sources should be evaluated separately – there are no marks available for a comparison of their usefulness.
- The best answers make clear the criteria being used to form a judgement about the source's usefulness. This could be because the source is reliable, it provides insight into people's attitudes, it covers a wide timescale or is about important individuals/events etc.

Source utility – mark scheme / China Source B

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A simple judgement on utility is given, and supported by undeveloped comment on the content of the sources and/or their provenance¹. Simple comprehension of the source material is shown by the extraction or paraphrase of some content. Limited contextual knowledge is deployed with links to the sources.
2	3–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judgements on source utility for the specified enquiry are given, using valid criteria. Judgements are supported by developed comment related to the content of the sources and/or their provenance¹. Comprehension and some analysis of the sources is shown by the selection and use of material to support comments on their utility. Contextual knowledge is used directly to support comments on the usefulness of the content of the sources and/or their provenance.
3	6–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judgements on source utility for the specified enquiry are given, applying valid criteria with developed reasoning which takes into account how the provenance¹ affects the usefulness of the source content. The sources are analysed to support reasoning about their utility. Contextual knowledge is used in the process of interpreting the sources and applying criteria for judgements on their utility.
Notes 1. Provenance = nature, origin, purpose.		

Source B: A government poster published in China in 1975. The poster was published with the caption, 'Mountain village medical station, 1975.' It is showing a young barefoot doctor and two village leaders.

How useful are Sources B and C for an enquiry into healthcare reforms in Mao's China?



Source utility – exemplar answer 12 (extract)

Source B depicts a young barefoot doctor and two village leaders, we can observe medications also in this image. We know that Mao attempted to improve healthcare as part of his attacks on Liu and Deng between 1963 and 1965. This source is useful as it provides a visual representation of the doctors within China. It also provides a specific type of doctor within these reforms. Furthermore this source is from 1975 meaning it is a first hand source from the time making it useful. This source is however a poster meaning it was intended to act as a message of propaganda to the civilians within China and is therefore likely biased or designed to cause a view. It is also produced by the government in a time of media control further causing biased. However it does allow us to learn how the government

wished to portray these reforms and perhaps what the people thought providing some use.

The answer identifies key elements of the image – a barefoot doctor, two village elders, and medication in the bag. It then summarises the useful elements of the content.

Contextual knowledge is integrated into the answer, showing knowledge of Mao's health reforms.

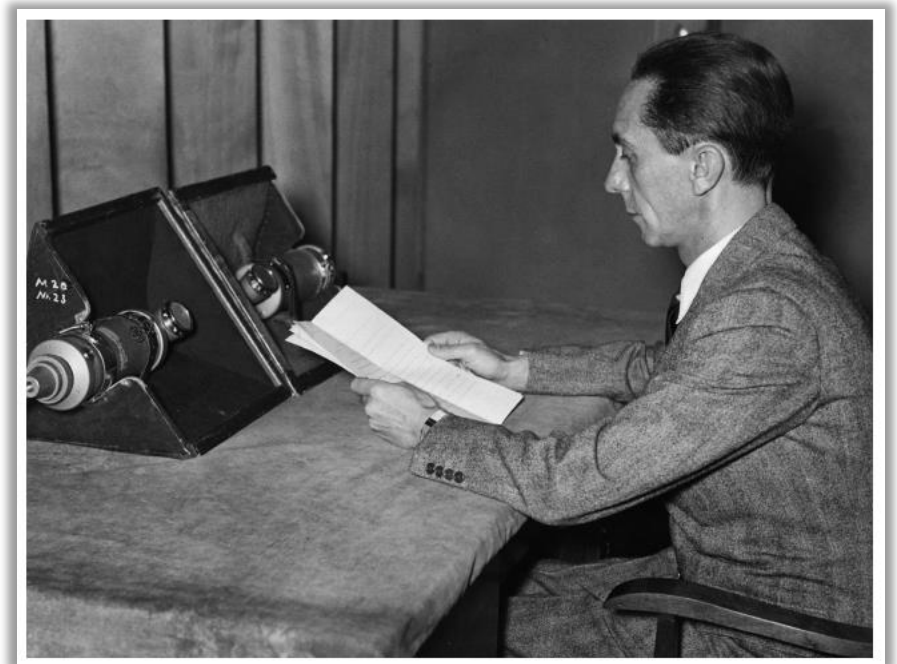
Recognises that a poster from the government is likely to be unreliable but also that this provides additional value because it offers some insight into government policies.

This answer (Sources B and C) received **8 marks**.

Source evaluation, reliability

- Comments that a source is reliable because it is from the time, that it is accurate because it is a photograph, that it may be exaggerated because it is a newspaper, are all generic answers, that could apply to any source and are Level 1 responses.
- Too many answers dismiss sources, saying they are biased. These answers need to provide support for this comment, e.g., examples of loaded language, but they also need to think more carefully about how this affects the usefulness of the source.
- A biased account can be useful evidence of what people thought, how the author wanted to present themselves, or the values of society.
- A photograph should not be dismissed because it might be staged – this again provides useful insight into the purpose of the photograph and the answer should consider who was the intended audience.

Source C: A photograph published in a German newspaper in 1935. It was taken by Hitler's official photographer. The photograph shows Josef Goebbels, Hitler's Minister for Propaganda, making a radio broadcast. He is reading out Hitler's New Year message to the German people.



Source evaluation, reliability

- Students should also take note of everything in the source attribution.
- For example, from the Warfare paper:

However, many students suggested the photograph was unreliable because it was government propaganda.

Many students focused on the time gap and suggested the account was unreliable because the author would have forgotten details; this ignored the point that the account was based on the diary Simmons had written at the time.

Source A: A photograph taken by a member of the London Fire Brigade. It shows firefighters dealing with a warehouse fire in London, 7 September 1940. The photograph was kept by the Fire Brigade as a record of its work during the Blitz.



Source B: From an account written by R Simmons in 1994. The account was based on a diary he kept during the Second World War. Here he is recalling a V2 attack in January 1945. He was 15 years old at the time of the attack.

The destruction was complete. The V2 had fallen in the middle of the road, creating a large crater, and the houses had collapsed.

The rescue services were quickly organised. A team of people was allocated to each of the demolished houses. There were frequent calls for silence so that we could listen for trapped victims under the rubble. Being reasonably small, I was asked to crawl into one pile of wreckage because there was a little girl in the house. Her cries could be heard but a fire was starting to build up. A chain of rescuers began to remove the rubble while the firemen aimed their hoses at the fire. Eventually she was brought out only slightly cut and bruised.

Source inference – exemplar answer 13

- Many candidates scored the full 4 marks on this Paper 3 question.
- They have understood that the inference must be linked to the enquiry in the question and needs to be supported by details from the source rather than from their own knowledge.

Source A: A painting by a Russian artist, 1922. The painting shows Red Army soldiers requisitioning grain from peasants.



1 Give **two** things you can infer from Source A about War Communism.

Complete the table below to explain your answer.

(i) What I can infer:

The peasants disliked war communism.

Details in the source that tell me this:

The peasants look incredibly displeased by the requisitioning, implying how unfair and shocking it was.

(ii) What I can infer:

War communism was very forceful.

Details in the source that tell me this:

The Red Army soldiers carry rifles, implying that they need to be threatening.

(Total for Question 1 = 4 marks)

Source enquiry follow-up question

(b) Study Source B.

How could you follow up Source B to find out more about the difficulties in dealing with the effects of German attacks on London?

In your answer, you must give the question you would ask and the type of source you could use.

Complete the table below.

(4)

- Answers to this Paper 1 question should show an understanding of the early stages of the historian's work.
- In the first two parts of the answer, the candidate identifies a detail to be followed up as part of a larger enquiry and suggests an appropriate question that would provide an appropriate line of research.
- The proposed question should relate to the broader enquiry in the question rather than follow up an individual detail in the source.
- Marks can be given for each of these parts of the answer.

Detail in Source B that I would follow up:

Question I would ask:

What type of source I could use:

How this might help answer my question:

Source enquiry follow-up question

- Part 3 should identify an appropriate source.
- Part 4 explains what sort of information that source might contain that would help to answer the proposed question.
- The source should be as specific as possible. Generic sources, e.g., newspapers, diaries, government records, army records, etc., are too broad to be suitable but they can be validated in Part 4 if the explanation is specific.
- The source should be something likely to already exist, not something the historian could create, for example a newspaper article containing an interview from the time is acceptable, but the suggestion that the historian should conduct an interview is not. Therefore, students should be familiar with the types of sources available for their Historic Environment.

Detail in Source B that I would follow up:

Question I would ask:

What type of source I could use:

How this might help answer my question:

Source enquiry follow-up example

(b) Study Source B.

How could you follow up Source B to find out more about the difficulties in dealing with the effects of German attacks on London?

In your answer, you must give the question you would ask and the type of source you could use.

Complete the table below.

(4)

Source B: From an account written by R Simmons in 1994. The account was based on a diary he kept during the Second World War. Here he is recalling a V2 attack in January 1945. He was 15 years old at the time of the attack.

The destruction was complete. The V2 had fallen in the middle of the road, creating a large crater, and the houses had collapsed.

The rescue services were quickly organised. A team of people was allocated to each of the demolished houses. There were frequent calls for silence so that we could listen for trapped victims under the rubble. Being reasonably small, I was asked to crawl into one pile of wreckage because there was a little girl in the house. Her cries could be heard but a fire was starting to build up. A chain of rescuers began to remove the rubble while the firemen aimed their hoses at the fire. Eventually she was brought out only slightly cut and bruised.

Source enquiry follow up – exemplar answer 14

Detail in Source B that I would follow up:

'There were frequent calls for
science so that we could listen
for trapped victims under the
rubble.'

Question I would ask:

How many victims found
did not survive due to the
significant damage?

What type of source I could use:

The type of source I could
use is a newspaper or a
photograph.

How this might help answer my question:

It could help answer my
question as it would show
the conditions families lived
in during that time.

Source B describes the actions of rescuers trying to free people who were trapped under rubble.

A valid detail is identified in **Part 1** and the proposed question in **Part 2** is an appropriate follow-up question that would relate to the wider enquiry in the question.

Part 3 of the answer suggests sources of information, which are broad and not very specific.

Part 4 of this answer does not explain how the information such sources might contain would answer the proposed question. The comment that these sources would show the conditions families lived in is not relevant to an enquiry about the difficulties in dealing with the effects of German attacks.

This answer received **2 marks**.

Source questions – average marks

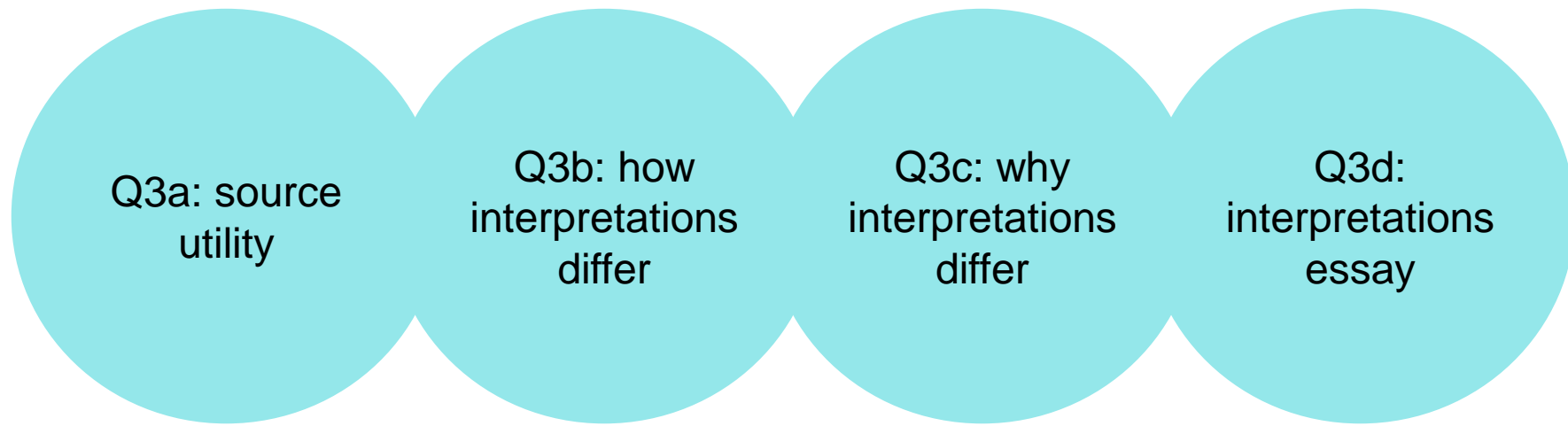
- The table below shows average marks on the various source questions for Medicine and Germany in May/June 2024. (The patterns are similar on the other Paper 1 and Paper 3 options.)
- On source utility, grade 9 students were mid-high Level 3, grade 7 students were borderline Level 2/3, grade 4 students were mid-high Level 2, and grade 1 students high Level 1.
- Performance on the follow-up enquiry has improved since 2018.

2024	Global avge	Grade 9 avge	Grade 7 avge	Grade 4 avge	Grade 1 avge
Medicine source utility (8m)	4.43	6.92	5.63	4.15	2.62
Medicine follow-up enquiry (4m)	2.24	3.30	2.78	2.17	1.36
Germany source inference (4m)	2.95	3.62	3.37	3.01	2.02
Germany source utility (8m)	4.57	7.16	5.97	4.43	1.75



Questions targeting
AO4 interpretations

Paper 3 Question 3 – the enquiry package



- The enquiry 'package' in Paper 3 looks at the later stages of the historian's work.
- We've looked at Q3a source utility (AO3) – students analyse the strengths and weaknesses of sources, and this prepares them to look at how historians build their interpretations.

Question 3b – how interpretations differ

- Question 3a leads the candidates to think about the strengths and weaknesses of sources (source utility) and in Question 3b to recognise that historians may validly reach different conclusions (possibly linked to the sources consulted or the focus of the research).
- Top marks in this question require explicit reference to the Interpretations – the mark scheme for Level 2 states:

The interpretations are analysed and a key difference of view is identified and supported from them.

- Many candidates scored the full 4 marks on Question 3b.
- Where answers failed to score 4 marks, the common problems were:
 - Identifying the difference between the Interpretations but not supporting the explanation by referring to details from each Interpretation.
 - Summarising the view in each Interpretation but not explicitly identifying the difference.
 - A few answers wrote about the Sources instead of the Interpretations.

Question 3c – why interpretations differ

- Question 3c is aimed at helping students to realise that historians can validly reach different conclusions.
- Many candidates scored 4 marks by explaining that the authors of the Interpretations placed weight on different sources. For full marks, this needs an explanation of the link between the Interpretations and Sources, and this must be supported with references to each Interpretation and each Source.
- Some answers explained that the authors had a different focus, for example looking at political, social, or economic issues, different periods, or different groups in society. How this focus led to different views in the Interpretations must be explained and supported – it is not enough to say the authors have focused on different things and repeat the difference identified in Question 3b.
- A few explained that the authors were intentionally writing from different perspectives, for example attempting to explain success or failure; again, this must be supported from the Interpretations.
- The suggestion that the difference can be accounted for by considering the date it was produced, or the nationality of the author, is not valid, and no marks can be given for answers assuming the authors were writing from their own experiences.

Question 3c – why interpretations differ

- The key point here is the recognition that the authors have **chosen** to present their information in a way that creates a certain impression. The reason suggested must be supported from the Interpretations.
- Level 2 of the mark scheme says:
- *An explanation of a reason for difference is given, **analysing the interpretations**. The explanation is **substantiated effectively**.*
- This means that whichever approach is used, explicit references to both Interpretations must be used to support the explanation.
- The table below shows how the average marks dip for Q3c compared to Q3b, even to an extent among higher-attaining students. (The pattern is very similar on the other three Paper 3 options.)

Germany (2024)	Global avge	Grade 9 avge	Grade 7 avge	Grade 4 avge	Grade 1 avge
Q3b how interps differ (4m)	3.17	3.92	3.77	3.35	1.45
Q3c why interps differ (4m)	1.94	3.75	3.10	1.65	0.21

Why interpretations differ – exemplar answer 15

(c) Suggest **one** reason why Interpretations 1 and 2 give different views about the experience of women in the Soviet Union under Stalin's rule.

You **may** use Sources B and C to help explain your answer.

(4)

The interpretations may differ because the historians have used different sources. Interpretation 1 says how ~~women were only valued for their work~~ "The numbers of women in important positions...dropped" which is similar to where it says in Source B "The local party does not even have a women's organiser." In contrast, interpretation 2 says how "The number of women in education ~~also~~ also doubled" which is similar to where source C says "women are given the same rights to work, ... and to have rest, education and maternity pay."

This answer uses quotations from the Interpretations and links them to quotations from the Sources in order to explain that the difference in the views of the historians is because they have given weight to different sources.

It received **4 marks**.

Question 3d – Interpretations essay

- Question 3d is the culmination of the enquiry package in Question 3.
- Candidates have already identified that there are two valid interpretations and are now asked how convincing they find Interpretation 2.

(d) How far do you agree with Interpretation 2 about Nazi methods of controlling the German people in the years 1933–39?

Explain your answer, using **both** interpretations and your knowledge of the historical context.

(16)

- There are three key strands in the mark scheme which contribute to the judgement about Interpretation 2. Level 4 states:

Answer provides **an explained evaluation reviewing the alternative views in coming to a substantiated judgement. Precise analysis of the interpretations is shown, indicating how the differences of view are conveyed and deploying this material to support the evaluation. Relevant contextual knowledge is precisely selected to support the evaluation. An overall judgment is justified and the line of reasoning is coherent, sustained and logically structured.**

Question 3d – Interpretations essay

- Good answers identify the overall thrust of Interpretation 2 and examine the details that combine to create that view. Contextual knowledge is interwoven into this, confirming or challenging these details.
- Interpretation 1 should also be analysed – either used to challenge Interpretation 2 or examined independently.
- The most common mistake here is to use the Interpretations as a springboard for an essay offering the candidate's own judgement on the enquiry – there are no marks available for AO1 or AO2.
- A second, common mistake, is to omit contextual knowledge and to present the details from the Interpretations as evidence that the Interpretation is correct, or to simply state that they know these details are true.
- Contextual knowledge is a strand within the mark scheme, but it must be linked to the evaluation of the Interpretations rather than being offered as an answer to the enquiry or as a stand-alone section of information.

Question 3d – room for improvement

- Every level of the mark scheme focuses on the Interpretations. Therefore, an answer where the student offers their own views on the enquiry can be credited for relevant contextual knowledge but cannot progress very far as the knowledge should be used in the evaluation of Interpretation 2 and the answer is not addressing the other strands of the mark scheme.
- Furthermore, except for Level 1, every level of the mark scheme refers to Interpretationss and student who only refer to one Interpretation are again limiting their mark.
- Students often use the Interpretations as stimulus points for an answer presenting their own views, making a statement about the Interpretation before including a lengthy section of own knowledge.
- Sometimes, they treat the Interpretations as sources and try to evaluate them for reliability.
- The table below shows how the average marks for Germany Q3d compared to Medicine Q6 – SPaG marks not included. (The pattern is similar across the Paper 1 and Paper 3 options.)

2024	Global avge mark	Grade 9 avge mark	Grade 7 avge mark	Grade 4 avge mark
Medicine Q6 (AO1/2)	9.32	14.51	12.15	8.81
Germany Q3d (AO4)	7.54	13.66	10.94	7.15

Question 3d – mark scheme

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
1	1–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Answer offers simple valid comment to agree with or counter the interpretation. Limited analysis of one interpretation is shown by selection and inclusion of some detail in the form of simple paraphrase or direct quotation. Generalised contextual knowledge is included and linked to the evaluation.
2	5–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Answer offers valid evaluative comment to agree with or counter the interpretation. Some analysis is shown in selecting and including details from both interpretations to support this comment. Some relevant contextual knowledge is included and linked to the evaluation. An overall judgement is given but its justification is insecure or undeveloped and a line of reasoning is not sustained.
3	9–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Answer provides an explained evaluation, agreeing or disagreeing with the interpretation. Good analysis of the interpretations is shown indicating difference of view and deploying this to support the evaluation. Relevant contextual knowledge is used directly to support the evaluation. An overall judgement is given with some justification and a line of reasoning is generally sustained.
4	13–16	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Answer provides an <u>explained evaluation reviewing the alternative views in coming to a substantiated judgement</u>. <u>Precise analysis of the interpretations is shown, indicating how the differences of view are conveyed and deploying this material to support the evaluation.</u> <u>Relevant contextual knowledge is precisely selected to support the evaluation.</u> <u>An overall judgment is justified and the line of reasoning is coherent, sustained and logically structured.</u>

Question 3d – Interpretations essay example

(d) How far do you agree with Interpretation 2 about Nazi methods of controlling the German people in the years 1933–39?

Explain your answer, using **both** interpretations and your knowledge of the historical context.

Interpretation 1: From *The Third Reich, A New History* by M Burleigh, published in 2000.

Goebbels, as Minister of Propaganda, aimed to spread Nazi ideas in a variety of subtle ways in daily life. For example, photographs in magazines showed the Führer laughing on the telephone or admiring cars on display at the Automobile Show. Radio broadcasts created an emotional tone, using fanfares and warlike music.

Mass rallies, such as those at Nuremberg, were a combination of popular celebration, military parade, political meeting and sacred ceremony. These rallies were spectacular, themed events, reflecting how the Nazi regime wished to see itself.

Interpretation 2: From *Coercion and Consent in Nazi Germany*, an article by R Evans, published in 2007.

The main technique used to create terror was the use of the law. It was against the law to belong to any political group apart from the Nazi Party. It was also illegal to tell jokes about Hitler and illegal to spread rumours about the Nazi government.

The police had the legal power to open people's letters and listen to phone calls. The police could also imprison people without trial. For example, in 1933, 100 000 people were imprisoned without a trial. New laws were passed to extend the use of the death penalty.

Question 3d – exemplar answer 16 (extract)

I agree with Interpretation 2 to a large extent. I know that Hitler introduced a variety of laws and practices in order to keep control. When considering the phrase "the police could also imprison people without trial", I know from my own knowledge that Hitler abolished trial by ~~jury~~ jury, instead he left the ~~the~~ decisions up to the judges who were forced to join the Nationalist Socialist League for the maintenance of the law if they wanted to continue practising. One judge, Roland Freisler was renowned for his trials, 90% of the defendants who faced trial before him received the death penalty. Moreover, in some cases, Hitler took it upon himself to decide the subject's penalty. This shows that the law had a huge part in controlling people. I also agree with Interpretation 2 when considering the impact of the law on banning political parties, as seen through "it was against the law to belong to any political party". In 1933, Hitler began by banning the communist party before banning all other parties except for the NSDAP. He ransacked SPD offices, destroying their contents and confiscating

their funds. Therefore, it is clear that the law played a major role in allowing him to control people and parties, consequently allowing the Nazi party to gain more support. Arguably, the most significant example

There is a clear focus on the overall view being evaluated.

Specific references to details within the Interpretation.

Precise contextual knowledge is used to evaluate the Interpretation.

Question 3d – exemplar answer 16 (extract), *cont'd*

However, there may be certain aspects of Interpretation 2 that force me to only partially agree with its sentiments. It may be argued that law was not used to completely control the German people and that it instead was a facade for Hitler to arrest those he simply saw as undesirable. Therefore, it may be argued that the main way of controlling people was by simply using brute force. I know that 150,000 people were put under protective arrest in 1933 showing that Hitler simply used force and ~~did~~ did not consider the law.

There is a clear focus on the overall view being evaluated.

Precise contextual knowledge is used to evaluate the Interpretation.

This extract shows good evaluation of Interpretation 2. There are regular references to the content of Interpretation 2 and precise details from contextual knowledge are used to both confirm and challenge the view offered in the Interpretation.

Question 3d – evaluating the interpretations

- Most students understand that the Q3d mark scheme requires them to evaluate Interpretation 2, analyse both Interpretations and, at Levels 3 and 4, indicate the difference in the Interpretations.
- Consequently, the best responses remained focused on the Interpretations throughout the answer.
- Examiners can sometimes identify details from the Interpretations being used, but if this is presented as the student's own knowledge, it cannot be credited as analysis of the Interpretations. Higher-level responses make regular references to details within the Interpretations.
- When the answer discusses Interpretation 2, then Interpretation 1, before offering a judgement, there is a risk that the student shows little sense of evaluation until the end.
- Higher-level responses identify how the authors created different impressions by their choice of language, tone, emphasis, selection or omission of details, etc. This was seen in comments such as 'details in the Interpretation are all positive', 'the language is entirely negative', and 'this Interpretation has a more balanced view as it mentions both positive and negative aspects'.

Question 3d – command word guidance

- On the Edexcel website, there's a zipped file containing **student-friendly guidance** on command words, stimulus points and approaches to each question type.
- Download the zipped file [here](#).

How far do you agree? (Q3d)

The final step is to decide **how far you agree with Interpretation 2**, based on:

- Your analysis and evaluation of Interpretation 2...
- Your analysis and evaluation of Interpretation 1...
- Your contextual knowledge of the period and how it supports/challenges both views...
- Your clear judgement on how far you agree with Interpretation 2 and why.



I find Interpretation 1 more convincing because... **therefore I don't agree with Interpretation 2.**

Interpretation 2 is convincing because... this view is only partly challenged by... so overall **I agree with Interpretation 2 to a large extent.**

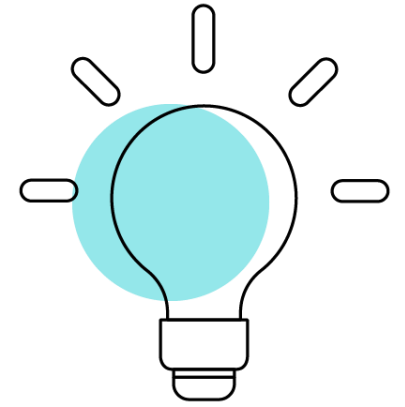
When making a judgement about how far you agree with Interpretation 2, you should remember that there is not one correct answer. The two interpretations offer different, **equally valid** views, and each of them can be convincing! You just need to **back up your argument** with evidence or 'valid criteria'.

Remember though the question specifically asks **How far you agree with Interpretation 2** – so your evaluation/ conclusion must address this even if you agree more with Interpretation 1!

E.g.: Overall, I agree with Interpretation 2 to a large extent, because although the Hitler Youth ran fun activities to attract many young people, as shown in Interpretation 1, the Nazis had to make it compulsory and punish parents who did not enrol their children. They also had to ban other youth groups such as Edelweiss Pirates. Interpretation 2 is therefore more convincing because it accurately shows the situation as Germany moved closer to war and reflects better the true purpose of the Hitler Youth movement, which was to indoctrinate young people into Nazi ideas and develop military skills, rather than to provide fun activities, therefore I agree less with Interpretation 1...

Examiner Reports

- This presentation has highlighted key features of strong and less strong answers.
- More detailed and paper-specific commentaries are provided through the Examiner Reports ([here](#)) written by the Principal Examiner on each paper.
- These reports also contain exemplar student answers with examiner commentaries.
- An excellent way to gain further insight into the application of the mark schemes is to become an examiner. The guidance from senior examiners, together with the range of answers seen by examiners, develops your understanding of the mark scheme and your confidence in applying it.
- You can find out more about **becoming an examiner** with Pearson at: <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-for-you/assessment-associates/vacancies/working-with-us.html>



Changes for 2025 and 2026



Improving the student experience

Pearson Edexcel GCSE History Improvements

In response to your feedback, we are making improvements to our GCSE History qualification. We are confident that these small changes will make a big difference.


Summer 2024	Summer 2025	Summer 2026	Next reform
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Additional review of all 17 papers:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• clarity of questions• stimulus points that are accessible to a wider range of students.➤ Removal of Level 2 stimulus points cap.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Improvements to the assessment model:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• better ramping on opening questions• adding choice to Paper 3• extra time on each paper• minimising disruption for teachers and students.➤ Language amendments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Review of content:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• minor amendments to improve the way topics can be taught• for first teaching September 2024.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Making GCSE History more accessible to a wider range of students.➤ Making our qualification more diverse and inclusive.



Summary guidance on changes for 2025 and 2026

- Under the Guide dropdown on the Teaching and learning materials tab:
- <https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/History/2016/Teaching-and-learning-materials/gcse-history-changes-for-2025-and-2026-summary-guidance.pdf>
- Tables summarising the language, assessment and content amends
- Links out to more detailed guidance
- Publishers have been notified

There's nothing new – everything has been previously announced!



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GCSE History changes for 2025 and 2026: summary guidance

Summary of the changes, when they take effect and key support available



Specification Issue	Exam series	Changes covered	Release date	Key support
Issue 4 <i>(no longer live – all included in later issues)</i>	June 2024	Removal of Level 2 stimulus points cap	Sept 2023	Subject advisor update (15 Sept 2023)
	June 2025	Specification language changes to address outdated/problematic terms		Subject advisor update (10 July 2023) Track changes on Rationale FAQs Slides from PD event (5 Sept 2023)
Issue 5	June 2025	Changes to assessment model	June 2024	Subject advisor update (26 Feb 2024) Guide FAQs Recorded PD event (14 March 2024)
Issue 6	June 2026 onwards	Specification content changes	June 2024	Subject advisor update (14 June 2024) Topic guidance FAQs Recorded PD event (June 2024)

Support and training





Finding things on our website

- This document is a useful ‘cheat sheet’ to help you find support materials on the Edexcel website:
- <https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/History/2016/Teaching-and-learning-materials/gcse-history-support-materials-details-and-links.pdf>
- It’s updated whenever new materials are released – best thing to do is to **bookmark** the file.



Pearson Edexcel GCSE History:
free support materials, with details and links

Subject advisor
Mark Battye
History
Email : teachinghistory@pearson.com
Phone : +44 (0) 344 463 2535 (Teaching Services team | Mon - Fri, 9am - 5pm GMT)
[Access the history community](#) 
[Sign up to receive subject advisor updates](#)



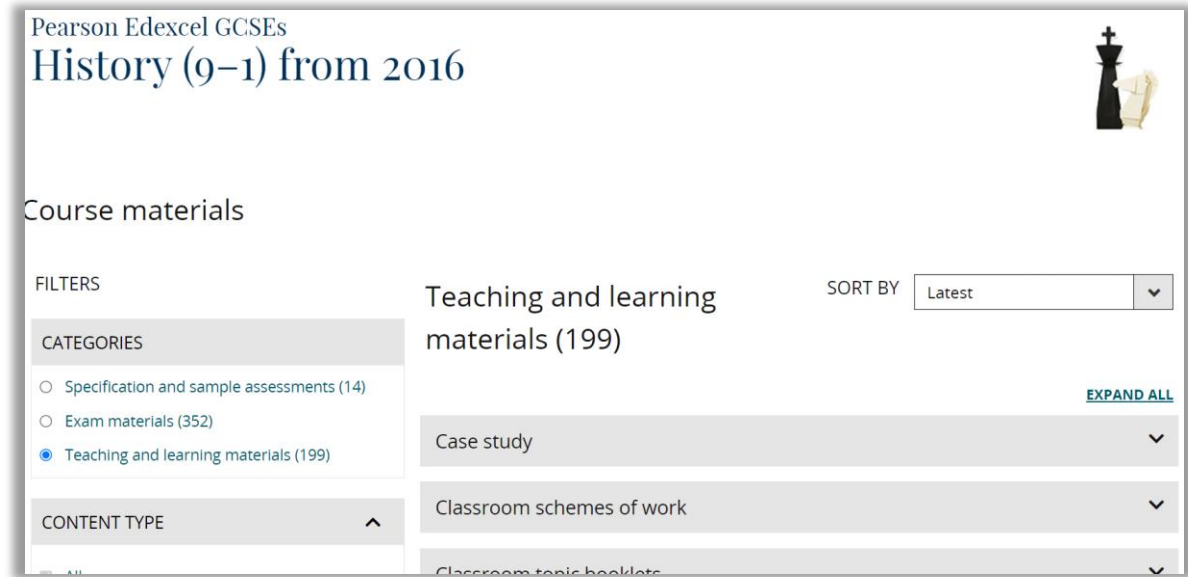
History qualification page
The latest news on our History qualifications, plus contact details for our History subject advisor, Mark Battye. Email: teachinghistory@pearson.com.
Sign up to receive monthly subject advisor updates [here](#).
A hyperlink is provided for each piece of support. Some links are directly to specific files, some are to the webpages or dropdowns where the files are stored.

Support materials	Details
Specification and sample assessment materials	The starting point for information on content and assessment in GCSE (9–1) History. The current versions are Issue 5 (for 2025) and Issue 6 (for 2026).
Specimen papers	An extra set of practice papers to exemplify the GCSE (9–1) History assessment model. <i>(NB not updated for 2025–26 changes.)</i>
Past papers, mark schemes and examiner reports	For every series since 2018. The examiner reports include exemplar student answers with examiner comments. An Edexcel Online login is required to access files with a silver padlock – check with your exams officer if you can’t open them.
Getting Started Guide	An overview of the specification, to help you get to grips with the content and assessment requirements. Updated June 2024 up to Issue 6 of the specification.
Summary guidance on changes for 2025 and 2026	Overview guidance on the changes being made for 2025 and 2026, including a table summarising the content changes for 2026.
Content changes for 2026: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Topic guidance• FAQs	Guidance for each option on the changes being made to the content for Issue 6 of the specification (first assessment June 2026), and FAQs.

Pearson Edexcel GCSE History: free support materials, with details and links1

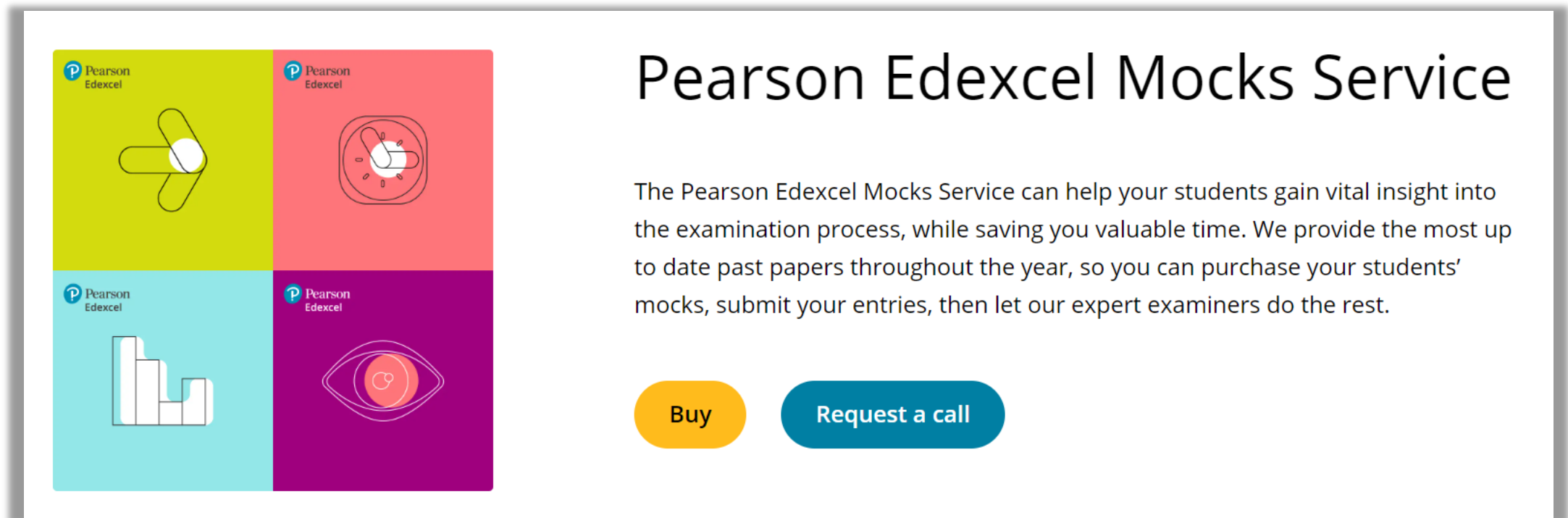
New and updated support materials

- [Summary guidance on 2025 and 2026 changes](#)
- [Minor erratum on Germany key topic 3](#)
- New [mock papers](#) (adapted from 2024 papers)
- Updated [2026 content changes FAQs](#)
- Updated [Getting Started Guide](#)
- [Results Plus global data for 2024 series](#)
- Updated topic booklets – *due October*
- Updated paper guides – *due October*
- Updated knowledge boosters – *due October*
- New Crime knowledge booster – *due November*
- New History topics of the month – Anne Lister, Zitkala-Sa, Millie Francis
- [Student-friendly guidance on command words and stimulus points](#)



New mock papers and Mocks Service

- New [mock papers](#) have been created (and padlocked) to use with your students this winter.
- They are adapted from the Summer 2024 papers to meet the new 2025 assessment model.
- Mark schemes also provided.
- The mock papers are being added to the paid-for Mocks Service. Find out more about the service [here](#).



The advertisement features a 2x2 grid of icons on the left, each with the Pearson Edexcel logo. The icons represent: a padlock (top-left, yellow), a hand holding a pen (top-right, pink), a bar chart (bottom-left, light blue), and an eye (bottom-right, purple). To the right of the grid, the title 'Pearson Edexcel Mocks Service' is displayed in a large, bold, black font. Below the title, a paragraph of text describes the service. At the bottom right, there are two buttons: a yellow 'Buy' button and a blue 'Request a call' button.

Pearson Edexcel Mocks Service

The Pearson Edexcel Mocks Service can help your students gain vital insight into the examination process, while saving you valuable time. We provide the most up to date past papers throughout the year, so you can purchase your students' mocks, submit your entries, then let our expert examiners do the rest.

[Buy](#) [Request a call](#)

Upcoming training

- Marking training – refresh understanding of the assessment model, practice marking student exemplars, address common issues and FAQs
 - Paper 1 – Wednesday 27 November, 16.00–17.30
 - Paper 2 – Tuesday 3 December, 16.00–17.30
 - Paper 3 – Wednesday 11 December, 16.00–17.30
- Sources and interpretations – *early 2025, date tbc*
- Updated student walkthroughs – *spring 2025*
- Find and book training events on Pearson's [Professional Development Academy](#)

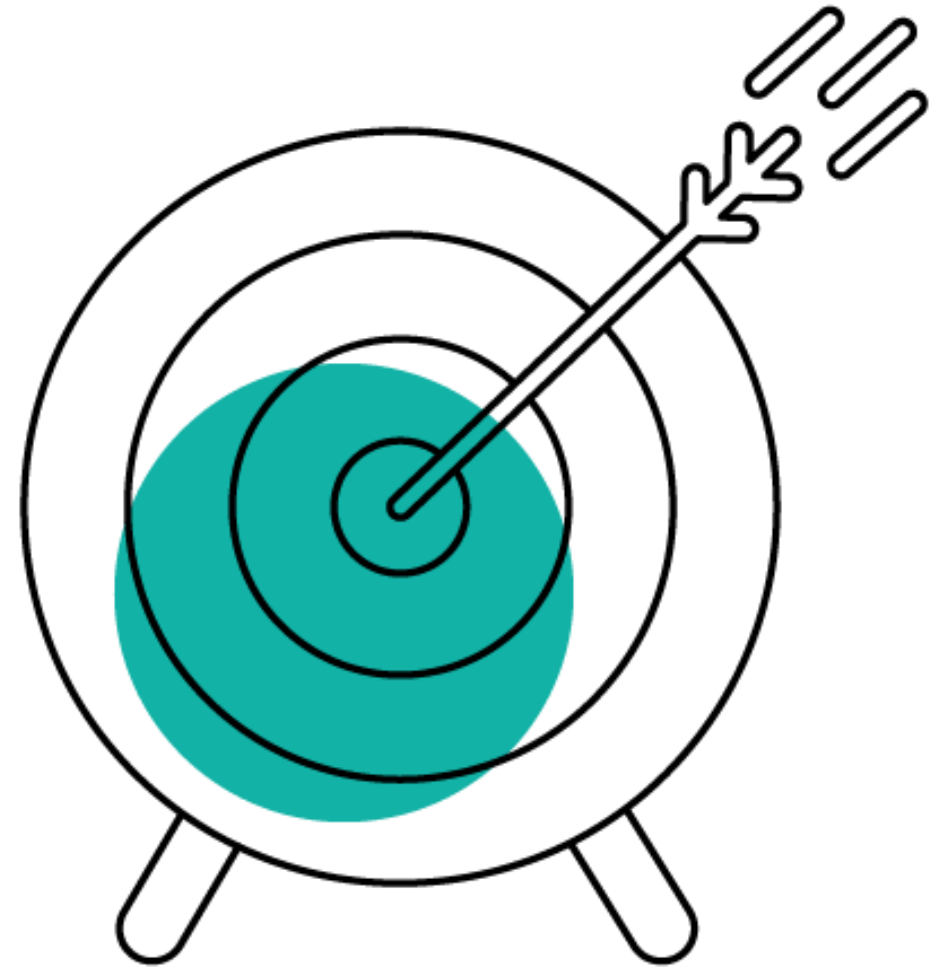
Curriculum and assessment review

- The new Labour government has commissioned an independent review, chaired by Professor Becky Francis into curriculum and assessment.
- The review will cover Key stages 1–5, and will focus on the key challenges to attainment for young people, especially those who are economically disadvantaged, or with special education needs or disabilities.
- The announcement can be read here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-launches-curriculum-and-assessment-review>
- The review aims, terms of reference and working principles can be read [here](#).
- Interim report due early 2025.
- Final review with recommendations in Autumn 2025.

GCSE History insights on May/June 2024

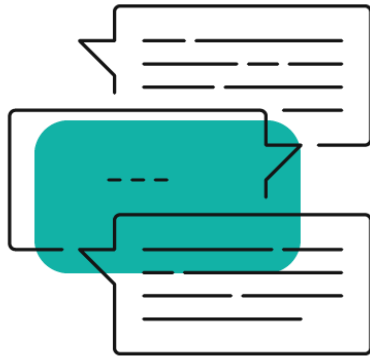
In this session we looked at the following objectives:

- the performance of candidates in the May/June 2024 series
- the variation of candidates' performances on different questions and why performance varies
- the Examiner reports
- common issues and FAQs



Subject Advisor Support

Our subject advisors are experts in their fields and are here to support you throughout the year.



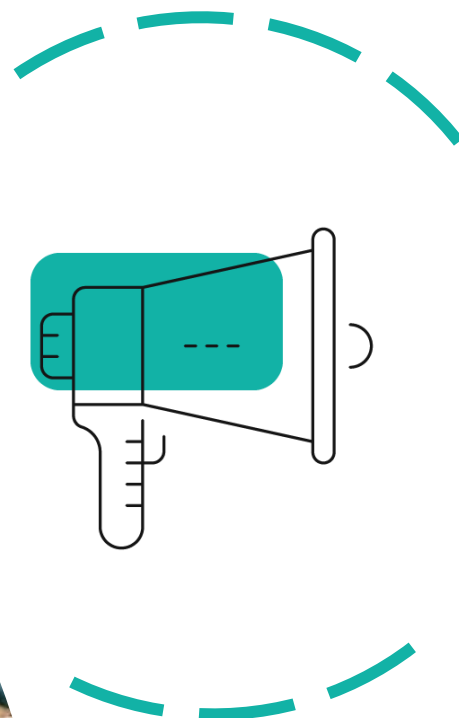
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Your Feedback Matters

Following this event, you will receive an invitation to share your thoughts about the session. Your feedback is invaluable to us, as it helps us tailor our professional development materials to better meet your needs. Please don't hesitate to let us know what you'd like to see more of and what areas you think could be improved.



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