

Principal Examiners Feedback Summer 2008

GCE

GCE History (6526)

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Introduction

This was the seventh Advanced Level examination of GCE History on this Specification. This particular Unit attracted an entry of over 21,000 candidates. Within this, there were wide variations in the number of candidates entering for different papers, with Paper 6E, '*Hitler and the Nazi State: Power and Control 1933-45*' attracting 8,128 candidates and, at the other end of the scale, Paper 6D, '*The Decline of the Liberal Party c.1900-29*' attracting 743 candidates.

All papers differentiated effectively and this produced a full range of marks. Whilst broad comparability across all papers was achieved by the range of questions asked, some adjustment to the grade boundaries was made where questions appeared to have created particular difficulties. The grade boundary marks published with this Report should be read with this in mind. A high grade boundary does not indicate that the paper was difficult, nor does a low one suggest that it was easy to attain high levels - indeed, the opposite may be the case. With these mechanisms available for fine-tuning, comparability of standards and demands across the different papers can be assured.

Examiners were required to take account of the quality of written communication displayed in candidates' responses. Whilst in most cases, the quality of written English was commensurate with candidates' quality of historical knowledge and understanding, there were far fewer candidates than last year experiencing problems in communicating effectively and within the normally accepted rules of English grammar. However, examiners have noticed a disturbing tendency amongst a small minority of candidates to use abbreviations commonly found when text messaging. Candidates should be reminded that this is not appropriate in a public examination.

Comments specific to each of the papers will be made later in this Report. There are, however, some comments that relate to the Unit as a whole and to all seven papers.

- Changes were made to this Unit as a whole and to two of the papers within the Unit for the 2007 series of examinations and the weighting of the assessment objectives was adjusted appropriately. The (a) response, marked out of 20, allocated 15 marks to A02 and 5 marks to A01. The (b) response, marked out of 40, allocated 30 marks to A02 and 10 marks to A01. As a consequence, examiners are now required to place far greater emphasis on the ways in which candidates evaluate and contextualise the given source material than on straightforward own knowledge. Thus a candidate who answers the (a) and (b) questions from their own knowledge, bringing in the occasional phrase from a relevant source in support, will not score as highly as the candidate who uses an evaluation of the given source material as the basis of their explanation or argument. However, it must be remembered that Assessment Objective 2 requires candidates to interpret, evaluate and use sources *in relation to their historical context*. Thus, a certain amount of specific own knowledge is needed to contextualise the sources and this can be credited at A02.
- Unit 6 is the synoptic Unit. It is synoptic principally in that it seeks to assess the full range of skills, ideas and concepts developed through the study of other AS and A2 units. Thus responses should be led by a careful analysis of the sources. Whilst it is not expected that candidates should rehearse, at this level, the sort of evaluation regarding bias, cross-referencing, utility and reliability seen in Unit 1, it is expected that candidates should internalise the skills developed from GCSE and AS source work and integrate these into their arguments. Whilst more candidates than in previous years were able to do this with confidence, too many candidates are still using the content of the sources as part of an extended, or explained, narrative.

- The quality of knowledge displayed by the majority of candidates was, as last year, commented on favourably by all examiners. Examiners were impressed by the depth, detail and range of knowledge shown by candidates on their chosen topics. The best scripts were absolutely excellent.
- The sources provided for the (b) question are intended to give candidates pointers to the different sorts of interpretations that are possible on a particular topic, and the primary sources can be used to back or challenge these interpretations. They are specifically selected to point in different directions in order to give candidates the opportunity to evaluate the differences in interpretations. More candidates than last year appreciated that the sources had been selected with this intention, although there were still a disappointingly large minority who used the sources as sources of information only.
- Both the questions on each of the papers involved both the use of sources and the candidates' own knowledge. However, the focus of the two questions was different. There were still candidates who seemed unaware of this.
 - The (a) question involves making and supporting a **judgement** on the **key features** of an historical movement, episode or issue. Candidates are expected to focus on three sources and contextualise them with the addition of some own knowledge where necessary to develop and/or support the judgement they are making about key features.
 - The (b) question focused on the making and supporting a **judgement** about an historical **interpretation**, with candidates being presented with an interpretation and invited to make and support a judgement about its truth or validity. A substantial minority of candidates did not seem aware of the fact that they were addressing an interpretation. Candidates are expected to focus on all the given sources, contextualise them appropriately and use their own knowledge where necessary in support or development.
- The key to the (b) question is to explain how two or more different arguments, drawn from two or more of the sources, can be sustained and developed using the other sources, appropriately contextualised. The aim is to show how different interpretations, identified from the sources, can be argued from both the content of the set sources and wider contextual knowledge, contrasting the emphases and evidence used in each point of view.
- Examiners reported that far fewer candidates than in previous years were dealing first with the sources and then going on to develop an answer using their own knowledge. However, there were still a disturbing number of formulaic answers, particularly in responses to the (b) question. Candidates adopting this approach dealt first with the interpretation given in the question and then moved on to discuss, in turn, 'other factors'. Whilst this approach might provide a 'safe' structure for less able candidates, it served to inhibit the more able, who struggled to fit what they wanted to say into a structure they had been taught to use.
- Relatively few candidates weighed the evidence they were presenting when reaching a conclusion. Presenting a supported case for two or more interpretations, candidates plumped for one, seemingly at whim, without giving any sort of logical judgement as to why they made this particular choice.
- The mark allocation is (a) 20 marks and (b) 40 marks, and this should work as a guide for candidates in their time allocation. As last year, too many candidates seemed not to

appreciate this. Very full answers were seen to the (a) part question, leaving scant time to respond to the (b) part, which always requires more thought and developed argument.

- Careful planning is a key to success on this paper. It is pleasing to report that the majority of candidates are now having the confidence to spend time working out carefully constructed answers. This invariably paid dividends as these candidates were able to focus on the question asked and maintained that focus in their answers.

6A: The Crisis of the Tudor State 1547-58

The (a) question gave candidates the opportunity to consider the reasons for the rebellions of 1549 by asking whether or not the reason for them lay in religious changes, using two contemporary sources and one secondary one. Candidates were able to explore both religious and non-religious causes of the rebellions by using Source 1 and add reference to the level of government enforcement using Source 2. Source 3 provided some context and further non-religious causes. Most candidates clearly found that the sources provided adequate material to reference the impetus to Kett's rebellion, with better responses developing this by using their own contextual knowledge to address such factors as class friction and economic conditions. There was some recognition of the selection of the demands presented in Source 1 as well as of the problem of evaluating the offences identified in Source 2 and the issues of how far this was imposed. Disappointingly, examiners saw little by way of direct, analytical source evaluation. Most responses stopped at inference-making and some limited cross-referencing; scant, if any, attention was paid to source provenance and so to reliability and utility.

Weaker responses simply described the two rebellions or, less commonly, the religious changes introduced by Edward VI's government. Better responses appreciated that Source 3 pulled the two primary sources together by conforming 1549 as a year of upheavals, suggesting, however, that as Edward's councils were strong enough to enforce revolutionary changes in worship and doctrine, the cause of the rebellions probably lay in over ambitious policies and confused ideology. Responses such as these demonstrated the use of candidates' own knowledge of the general acceptance of Edward's Reformation (with the notable exceptions of Gardiner and Bonner) as making religious reasons for the rebellions less likely.

(b) This question gave candidates the opportunity to address the issues surrounding the supposed mid-Tudor crisis and, by posing the hypothesis that disorder amongst crowns, councils and parliaments threatened the stability of the realm, enabled candidates to address differing interpretations of the 'Crisis' using two contemporary and three secondary sources. Disappointingly, a significant minority of candidates delivered a standard 'Crisis, what crisis?' essay which, though accurate in itself, was not focused on the given question and so could not score highly. Similarly, some candidates addressed the sources in sequence, paying limited attention to the focus of the question and failing, because of the structure of their answer, to provide a coherent explanation.

At lower levels, candidates were able to compare the sources and linked them with their own knowledge. Here, candidates tended either to support or challenge the quotation in Source 6. Those supporting the claim found support for Elton's view in Source 4. The more perceptive candidates pointed out the problems involved in relying too heavily on the veracity of Source 4 because of its provenance. Source 3 provided an alternative interpretation of the mid-Tudor years from that of Source 6, and a pleasing number of candidates were able to find links from this to the interpretation of Mary's reign given in Source 5 and with Edward's Act of Uniformity, an extract from which forms Source 2. Appropriate contextualisation of these Sources enabled the more able candidates to explore the roles of Edward, Mary, and their Councils. In particular, higher level responses explored the fall of Somerset, the role of Northumberland and the problems Mary had in achieving her aims.

At level 3 and above, candidates developed their explanations showing, with varying degrees of effectiveness, their understanding of the different interpretations concerning the mid-Tudor crisis. For levels four and five, candidates presented a sustained argument, recognising the existence of different interpretations about the mid-Tudor crisis and showing an understanding that historians have presented the period in different ways, as exemplified by the sources and reinforced by their own knowledge. They engaged appropriately with the differences of emphasis contained in Sources 3, 5 and 6 and, in coming to a conclusion, some of the most able

candidates were able to marshal the sources to support their own opinion, but at the same time also recognised the existence and merits of alternative interpretations.

6B: The Quest for Settlement: Cromwell and the Protectorate 1653-58

(a) This question gave candidates the opportunity to explore the reasons why the first Protectorate parliament failed, using two contemporary and one secondary source. There were some very detailed answers and many candidates included a great deal of own knowledge as well as the views of historians. However, examiners found it disappointing that very few candidates really addressed the sources as evidence. Far too often the sources were taken at face value and never interrogated nor evaluated. This was not because candidates could not access the sources: clear comprehension was evident across all ability levels. Unfortunately, too many candidates seemed unaware of the weighting of the assessment objectives and this meant that candidates who knew a lot but did not appropriately address the sources could not move out of Level 2.

Most candidates took Source 1 as their starting point and from Cromwell's upbraiding of parliament made appropriate and informed inferences as to why it did not fulfil his expectations. Source 2 provided candidates with the constitutional foundation on which the Protectorate parliaments were based, and many linked this with Source 1 to show either that Cromwell's expectations were unrealistic and/or that MPs were/were not working to the Instrument of Government. Source 3 provided candidates with an explanation of Cromwell's attitudes to the parliamentary system and many linked this to Sources 1 and 2 to provide an explanation for the failure of the first Protectorate parliament.

Candidates were able, with varying degrees of success, to reinforce the sources with their own knowledge. The best candidates displayed impressive knowledge about the ordinances passed by Cromwell and parliament's challenge to his right to do so, his aims and the insistence that MPs sign a 'Recognition', together with an understanding of the reasons for the conflict between the army and parliament.

(b) This question gave candidates the opportunity to address the issues surrounding the nature of the Protectorate and, by posing the hypothesis that it was nothing but a military dictatorship, enabled them to explore alternative interpretations as to the nature of the Protectorate by focusing on two contemporary and three secondary sources.

In line with their response to the (a) question, a significant number of candidates showed a very high level of own knowledge and many addressed a wider historiography than that provided by the sources. However, a lack of awareness of the importance of the use of sources kept many such responses in Level 3.

At lower levels, candidates started to compare the sources and link them with their own knowledge in support or challenge the given interpretation. Most candidates started with Source 5, which contains the given hypothesis, and found support for this in Source 4. Better candidates showed caution when using Source 4 by making sensible reference to its authorship. Candidates found challenge to the interpretation in Source 6, understanding that it played down the military element and appreciating that it implied Cromwell was desperately trying to find a settlement based on a parliamentary system. At higher levels, candidates found partial support for this view in Source 3, seeing it as seeking to explain Cromwell's attitude to parliaments in principle. Some cross-referenced to Source 2, the constitutional basis for a parliamentary government. This source was used, too, to show how Cromwell perceived his own role in the Protectorate as well as that of the army, and better responses used it selectively to support the interpretation given in Source 5.

At Level 3 and above, candidates developed their explanations by showing, with varying degrees of success, their understanding of the differing interpretations about the nature of the Protectorate. For levels four and five, candidates presented a sustained argument, recognising the existence of different interpretations about the nature of the Protectorate, and showing an

understanding that historians have presented the period in different ways, as exemplified by the sources and reinforced by their own knowledge. The best responses were those that fully engaged with the differences of emphasis contained in Sources 3, 5 and 6 and in reaching a conclusion, marshalled the sources to support their own opinion, but also recognised the existence and merits of alternative interpretations.

6C: Radicalism and the British State: the Chartist Experience 1838-50

(a) This question gave candidates the opportunity to explore the effectiveness of William Lovett as a leader of the Chartist movement in the years 1839-42, using two contemporary and one secondary source. The quality of the responses varied considerably. Whilst nearly all candidates understood that they needed to use the sources in their response, a disappointing number used the sources for information only. Far too many candidates seemed better prepared to answer a question on O'Connor's leadership than that on Lovett, and many turned the question round so that they ended up writing about O'Connell. Most candidates, however, were able at least to take the sources in turn and attempt to use them to answer the question. The better candidates treated the sources as evidence and argued their relative value in the context of the question and the sources' attributions. There was a fair range of judgements regarding Lovett, ranging from the dismissive to the more sophisticated, which recognised his significance in the early years of Chartism.

Most candidates began with Source 3 because it begins to explore Lovett's philosophy, and some appropriately contextualised the source with reference to his actions and activities within the LWMA and the Chartist movement. Better candidates used sources 1 and 2 to show a different side of the work and life of Lovett, who was traditionally regarded as the 'schoolmaster' of the movement. Such candidates appreciated that source 1 showed him to be a man of courage and integrity, willing to take sole responsibility for the resolutions of the Convention thereby risking arrest and imprisonment. They realised that source 3 not only emphasises Lovett's commitment to the Charter but his determination to seek support from organisations with similar objectives.

(b) This question gave candidates the opportunity to address the issues surrounding the rise and fall of Chartism by posing the hypothesis that it is wrong to concentrate on social and economic factors as an explanation, and enabled them to explore alternative interpretations of the phenomenon that was Chartism by focusing on three secondary and two contemporary sources.

The better candidates answered the question directly by weighing the relative importance of economic and social factors against political factors in explaining the rise and fall of Chartism. Whilst most candidates used the sources at some point in their responses, disappointingly far too many used them as sources of information. Only some candidates were able to integrate meaningful and unrehearsed comments about the attribution of the sources into their responses. Thus full and valid source evaluation was relatively rare.

At lower levels, candidates started to compare sources and to link the sources with their own knowledge to either support or challenge the given interpretation. Candidates supporting the given interpretation usually began with Source 6, which contains and explores the given hypothesis. Candidates found that this source provided the basis of the argument for Chartism being primarily a political movement and many developed this using their own knowledge. Higher level responses used Source 3 in support of Source 6, with its view that Chartism was a development from the eighteenth century political demands for a form of political democracy.

Many found that this view was further upheld by Source 2. The more perceptive candidates established a link with Source 4 because of the embedded implication that universal suffrage would deliver all the benefits listed there. Candidates who sought to challenge the given interpretation usually started with Source 5, which had a strong focus on economic imperatives and developed these using their own knowledge. Some candidates found support for this view by selective use of Source 4, whilst being wary of its provenance. Links were occasionally made with Source 3 and its assertion that Chartist supporters in the north were the casualties of capitalism.

At Level 3 and above, candidates developed their explanations, recognising that there are different interpretations concerning the rise and fall of the Chartist movement. At levels four and five, candidates presented a sustained argument, recognising the existence of different interpretations about the reasons for the rise and fall of Chartism, showing an understanding that historians have presented the period in different ways, as exemplified by the sources and reinforced by their own knowledge, and they engaged with the differences of emphasis contained in Sources 3, 5 and 6. In coming to a conclusion, they marshalled the sources to support their own opinion, but also managed to recognise the existence and merits of alternative interpretations. Only the very best recognised the inconclusive nature of the historical debate and could, for example, reconcile the views of Royle and Evans.

6D: Decline of the Liberal Party c1900-29

(a) This question gave candidates the opportunity to consider the effectiveness of Asquith as a leader in the Liberal Party in the years 1906-14, using two contemporary sources and one secondary one. The focus on Asquith was clearly not to every candidate's liking, despite the fact that he is central to the topic. Most candidates had a fairly good grasp of Asquith's track record within the Liberal Party; some attempted to compare Asquith's record to that of Lloyd George although this often took them away from the focus of the question. Candidates were able to use the sources as sources of information, although far too few attempted to compare the validity or utility of sources in terms of what they revealed about Asquith's leadership skills.

Most candidates began with Source 3, which summarised the positive achievements of the Liberal governments under Asquith's premiership, and developed this using their own knowledge of the Liberal government's achievements at this time. More able candidates linked this to Source 2, realising that it presented Asquith's own attitude to the provision of Old Age Pensions and his clear grasp of the need to distance these from benefits obtainable under the Poor Law. Such candidates approached Source 1 with care because of the nature of its author's relationship with Asquith, but they usually appreciated that it did give pointers to Asquith's character and were able to develop this by citing examples in support, or not, of the view given here. Candidates' own knowledge at the higher levels included an appraisal of the level of support for Asquith within the Cabinet, government and country, and detailed the reasons why he lost the premiership to Lloyd George.

(b) This question gave candidates the opportunity to explore the different interpretations of the reasons for the apparent failure of the Liberal party in the years to 1918 by presenting the hypothesis that this was due to the Party's failure to understand the needs of the working class. Candidates worked with three secondary and two contemporary sources. There were a number of strong answers to this question. However, some candidates chose to ignore the set question and answered a question of their own devising about the reasons for the decline of the Liberal Party. Centres must remind candidates that they should answer the question on the examination paper and not the one they would like to have seen there. A pleasing number of candidates, however, were able to write a constructive response which integrated their own knowledge with analytically informed source work. A range of arguments was produced, although most candidates argued that, at least until 1914, the Liberals understood and tried to address some of the concerns of the working classes but with mixed success. The best candidates answered the question by letting the sources and their evaluation, drive.

At lower levels, answers started to compare the sources and to link them with the candidate's own knowledge in support of or challenge to, the given interpretation. Those supporting the claim that the Liberal decline was caused by the Party's failure to understand the needs of the working class tended to start with Source 6, which set out very clearly how the Liberals failed to understand the needs of the working class and suggested that this was the case even whilst they were carrying out their policies of social reform. A pleasing majority chose to start with Source 3 as presenting the opposite case: that the social reforms of the Liberals made it very difficult for the Labour party to gain a foothold with the electorate. Source 5 stands somewhere between the two. Whilst acknowledging the traditional approach (Source 6) it suggests that this is the product of hindsight. More able candidates appreciated that Source 2, whilst showing sensitivity to the pauperising effects of the Poor Law, shows a Prime Minister more concerned with the niceties of administration than with the needs of the poor, and many more able candidates used it selectively to support either of the two main interpretations. Source 4, as many candidates picked up, shows a Minister of Munitions identifying the working man with the state, but many candidates questioned whether or not this was simply a political expedient.

At Level 3 and above, candidates developed an explanation that was developed and infused with recognition that there are different interpretations concerning the reasons why the Liberal Party declined. For levels four and five, candidates presented a sustained argument, recognising the existence of different interpretations about the Liberal decline and showing an understanding that historians have presented the period in different ways, as exemplified by the sources and reinforced by their own knowledge. Such candidates engaged with the differences of emphasis contained in Sources 3, 5 and 6. In coming to a conclusion, most marshalled the sources to support their own opinion, but also recognised the existence and merits of alternative views or issues these alternative interpretations present.

6E: Hitler and the Nazi State: Power and Control 1933-45

(a) This question gave candidates the opportunity to consider the seriousness of civilian opposition to the Third Reich in the years 1938-42, using two contemporary sources and one secondary source. The question was generally well answered, in that the great majority of candidates were able to access the sources and draw clear conclusions. Answers of either great strength or great weakness were very rare.

There were, however, problems. The common weaknesses were a failure to grasp the significance of the word 'serious' in the title and thus to offer a less pointed account of the nature of opposition, or to give a lengthy preamble on the various models of different types of resistance without directing it at the question. However, many candidates of all levels of ability did address 'seriousness', and many of the more able managed to refine this distinction, particularly in regard to Source 2, by pointing out that what was really trivial teenage rebellion was regarded by Himmler et al as an assault on the Volksgemeinschaft, or collided with a 'zero tolerance' policy on any kind of dissent.

A disappointing number of candidates were unable to escape the bounds of the sources, and the own knowledge offered by many was severely limited. The White Rose Movement was frequently cited, often by exaggerating its importance. Many candidates simply put it together with the very different Swing Youth and Edelweiss Pirates. Very few candidates mentioned Conservative opposition, except the (irrelevant in this connection) 1944 Plot. The Red Orchestra and such groups were infrequently mentioned and still less explored. However, a pleasing number of candidates mentioned the Church in general and Galen in particular, though fewer were able to argue that the Church's concerns were largely brushed aside by the regime.

Cross-referencing between the sources was rare, and usually undeveloped. Where it occurred, it was usually at the level of Source 1 saying there was little opposition and Source 3 arguing that there must have been a lot. Analysis of provenance was, in the main, weak where it was raised at all and was generally at the level of saying, for example, that Source 3 must be reliable because it was secondary. Source 1 was often portrayed as 'biased' because of its SOPADE origins, despite the fact that it was clearly downplaying the extent of opposition, though a pleasing minority were much better informed. More able candidates were able to explore the opposition of different social groups within the Third Reich and link this to the seriousness of civilian opposition. A few excellent responses additionally made reference to the ways in which opposition changed over time and related this to the sources.

(b) This question gave candidates the opportunity to explore the different interpretations of the power of the Führer by focusing on the viability of the interpretation that it was 'comprehensive and total', using three secondary and two contemporary sources. Most students showed an awareness of the debate surrounding the question and many were able to use the sources and their own knowledge to support or challenge the given interpretation. However, there was a minority of candidates who explored alternative interpretations without deploying them to address the question set. For example, a number of pupils focused on how 'strong' or 'weak' Hitler was as a dictator and, indeed, this seemed to be their preferred question that they were answering. Candidates should be reminded that they must address the question that is actually asked, not that which they would have liked to have been asked.

There was extensive reference to the structuralist / intentionalist debate and this was usually used to sort and analyse the sources. Offering of the Kershaw thesis as an ideal/ middle way was common, though few noted that Source 4 was not really in standard Kershaw 'working to the Führer' mode. In the main candidates were able to assimilate the range of views offered in the

sources effectively, and the better ones realised that Source 5, for instance, could at once show a lazy, distanced figure, and one who felt confident enough to adopt a more hands off approach

Very poor responses were extremely rare. Of these, many attempted to include Source 1 in their answers, and some repeated arguments used in (a). Less strong candidates frequently asserted that Himmler's using a little independent judgement somehow axiomatically weakened Hitler's authority: at the other extreme several candidates argued that even a very strong dictator had limits on what he could actually do or control. Most candidates, with more or less effectiveness, used their own knowledge to put the provided material and different interpretations into context. For example, candidates were particularly effective in contextualising Source 6 and in explaining its limitations. Some candidates presented the different interpretations without coming to a well-supported conclusion. Other candidates, at the higher levels, were able to organise and link evidence from the sources to present a sustained argument. Here one common approach was to use Sources 4 and 6 to develop an understanding of Source 5 and to establish a sustained and sometimes analytical argument.

6F: The Soviet Union after Lenin 1924-41

(a) This question gave candidates the opportunity to explore the purpose of the show trials of the 1930s, using two contemporary sources and one secondary one. Pleasingly, the vast majority of candidates were able to use the evidence in the sources to identify a range of purposes, although some tended to drift into a consideration of the Purges in general. There were far fewer candidates this year who ignored the sources and relied solely on their own knowledge. However, a disappointing number of candidates used the sources for content rather than entering upon a discussion of the nature of the evidence but the number of candidates in the cohort as a whole who did this does seem to be diminishing.

Weaker responses tended to evaluate at a rather simplistic level and did not attempt to relate the usefulness and limitations of each source to the focus of the question. Some candidates, for example, accepted the evidence of Maclean (Source 2) as being reliable merely on the grounds that the author was British.

A pleasing number of candidates felt comfortable with Source 1 and were able to challenge the usefulness of Vyshinski's speech, given the nature of the evidence as propaganda for the regime, and additionally commented on the language and tone of the source. This was often linked to the evidence of Source 2 by Fitzroy Maclean, which also seems to question the reasons for the trials given at the time. Where responses were more limited was in suggesting other alternative explanations. Most tended to rely on the view expressed in Source 3 by Roberta Manning, that the show trials were used to identify scapegoats for economic failures. Better answers developed this point by using their own knowledge to support, or occasionally reject, this assertion. The best answers usually attempted to link all three sources after weighing them up as evidence to resolve the issue, often by separating out the excuses from the underlying and genuine reasons for the show trials.

The use of own knowledge was often limited in its effectiveness. This was either because candidates dealt with own knowledge separately from the sources or because they used very little, possibly not understanding that the use of contextual knowledge is a part of Assessment Objective 2. For example, when assessing the validity of Source 3's assertion that the show trials related to an "industrial slowdown", candidates' own knowledge of economic problems during the 1930s was needed in order to contextualise this assertion.

(b) This question enabled candidates to address the debate over whether or not the people of the USSR benefited from Stalin's economic policies, using three secondary and two contemporary sources. It was a debate with which the vast majority of candidates clearly felt comfortable, and were able to develop answers beginning with the given sources. Most candidates were aware that they were dealing with an interpretation and attempted to look at the evidence that could be used to support and challenge the viewpoint.

Candidates frequently used Sources 5 and 7 as starting points to develop each side of the debate. Most candidates chose to side with the interpretation that few benefited, and used Sources 3, 4, and 6 as evidence to support their argument. Source 5, by the Soviet historian Kukushkin, was dismissed by many as evidence on the grounds of his background. Better answers questioned his argument by using their own knowledge of the poor living conditions at Magnitogorsk and the use of slave labour on some of the large building projects referred to by Kukushkin. Some candidates used their own knowledge of the Moscow Metro to show that some of Kukushkin's statements have a degree of validity to them.

Most candidates attempted to evaluate the sources by reference to their origin but some struggled to rise above the simplistic. Spotting whether a source is written pre- or post-

Glasnost is unlikely to impress, unless a relevant point is made about its impact on the nature of the evidence. Similarly, Lev Kopelev (Source 6) was often evaluated on the grounds of him being an eye witness rather than questioning why he went into exile and how this might affect the purpose of the source.

Although most answers were able to provide relevant development from the sources, some candidates tended to drift into other questions, such as how far Stalin's economic policies were a success. Better responses focused on "people" and often defined the various groups that economic policies affected. A few responses highlighted that the term "people" had ideological connotations that made its use in the USSR different from that in the West. Very good responses, and there were many, presented a sustained argument that weighed up the value of the evidence for each interpretation and provided a developed, reasoned judgement.

As in previous years, examiners found that some answers to part (b) were often too long. The result was that some responses had difficulty remaining focused and lost sight of the specific question. There were still some candidates that answered the question by mechanically going through each source in numerical order rather than structuring their answer around their argument. In some cases more time planning rather than writing answers might have produced tighter and more convincing arguments.

6G: The Origins and Early Development of the Cold War 1945-62

(a) This question gave candidates the opportunity to explore the reasons why Khrushchev's decision to place missiles on Cuba resulted in a crisis, using two contemporary and one secondary source. A disappointingly large minority of candidates chose to interpret this question as 'Why did Khrushchev place missiles on Cuba?' This altered the focus of the question, as happened with those candidates who considered the extent to which the events constituted a crisis. Candidates must be reminded that they have to answer the question that is there, not the one they would like to be there.

All candidates used the sources in their responses, but there were considerable differences in the effectiveness with which this was done. Indeed, there was relatively little engagement with either provenance or context. Disappointingly, the majority of candidates focused on using the sources as sources of information, not evidence. Too many used only part of a source in support of, or challenge to, their explanation and offered very little by way of cross-referencing or evaluation. Responses such as these tended to be embedded in the candidates' own knowledge of, for example, the background to the Crisis. Many candidates experienced problems with Source 2, either ignoring its apparent challenge to Sources 1 and 3, or noting the challenge and leaving it unresolved. Few picked up on the apparent contradiction of having the 'trump cards' and yet negotiating. Sources 1 and 3 tended to be taken at face value, leading to assertion and paraphrasing. Relatively few candidates had sound knowledge of relevant events before the missile crisis except for the Bay of Pigs debacle. The whole issue of US intimidation and aggression in Operation Mongoose was rarely seen and the long established US policy in terms of the Monroe Doctrine was only occasionally mentioned. Having said this, at Level 3 candidates were clearly able to display extensive, focused contextual knowledge combined with an ability to evaluate the given source material.

(b) This question gave candidates the opportunity to explore the debate about whether or not the development of the Cold War was dominated by US policy objectives, using two contemporary and three secondary sources. The majority of candidates were comfortable in doing this, and most clearly understood, at a range of different levels, that they were dealing with a range of interpretations. However, too many students used their own knowledge, and not the sources, to drive their answers and many adopted an episodic approach. This led to responses that, for example, described Marshall Aid in one paragraph, events in Berlin in the next (a few confusing the Berlin Blockade with the Berlin Wall) and the Cuban missile crisis in another. In this way, whilst an explanation might result, certainly an argument would be precluded. Indeed, these tended to be the 'most focused on' events in a question that ranged in time from 1945-62, which was disappointing. Still more disappointing was the tendency amongst all but the best responses to focus on that the US did, rather than on a consideration of the policy objectives that lay behind what was done. The focus for most was on the 1940s with some consideration of the Cuban missile crisis. A minority of candidates addressed the 1950s, which was surprising as reference to the Korean War (especially given the authorship of Source 5) would have been expected.

Relatively few candidates used the sources critically, and evaluation was often very basic and generic, to the extent that it interrupted the flow of whatever explanation was being given. Source evaluation should form part of the argument, not sit within responses as an uncomfortable 'must do'.

Too often examiners found that candidates had not really read the sources and absorbed what they had to offer in terms of detailed understanding of the differing interpretations. Examiners found that the application of 'labels' to specific interpretations was common, although it was clear that too many did not fully understand the 'labels' they were applying. For example, any anti-US view immediately led to the author being labelled as revisionist, Khrushchev appearing as a revisionist historian many times over. However, those candidates who had spent time reading and assimilating the source material and who planned their answers starting with the source material did well - far better than those candidates armed with the most facts and a list of factors into which they fitted the sources.

6526 Statistics

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Paper	Maximum Mark (Raw)	Mean Mark	Standard Deviation
1A	60	35.9	8.7
1B	60	35.8	9.4
1C	60	36.6	8.8
1D	60	40.2	9.1
1E	60	38.9	9.2
1F	60	32.6	8.1
1G	60	35.8	10

Paper 6A

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	42	38	34	30	26
Uniform boundary mark	120	96	84	72	60	48
% Candidates		25.6	41.4	60.5	78.0	88.2

Paper 6B

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	41	37	33	29	25
Uniform boundary mark	120	96	84	72	60	48
% Candidates		31.4	46.3	63.1	76.2	88.3

Paper 6C

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	43	39	36	33	30
Uniform boundary mark	120	96	84	72	60	48
% Candidates		26.7	42.9	56.1	69.4	78.9

Paper 6D

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	46	41	36	32	28
Uniform boundary mark	120	96	84	72	60	48
% Candidates		32.0	53.6	71.2	80.5	89.6

Paper 6E

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	46	42	38	34	31
Uniform boundary mark	120	96	84	72	60	48
% Candidates		25.1	41.3	57.9	72.6	81.4

Paper 6F

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	38	35	32	29	26
Uniform boundary mark	120	96	84	72	60	48
% Candidates		25.9	38.2	53.9	68.6	81.0

Paper 6G

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	44	40	36	32	28
Uniform boundary mark	120	96	84	72	60	48
% Candidates		23.0	36.4	51.5	66.6	79.3

Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced UMS grade boundaries

	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Advanced Subsidiary	300	240	210	180	150	120
Advanced	600	480	420	360	300	240

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