GCSE09 Modern World History A

Feedback on June 2012 (Unit 2)

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Introduction to the Assessment

Unit 2 Modern World Depth Study
2A Germany 1918-39
2B Russia 1917-39
2C The USA 1919-41

Assessment Objectives /

Skills Tested

Structure of Assessment

Key feedback points from the principal examiner's report: points to praise

- Overall standard of responses was pleasing.
- There is an improvement in candidates' approaches to the extended essay question 3.

'This is a challenging task and the success with which many candidates carry it out bears testament to good practice within the classroom'
(Examiner's report 2A, June 2012)

Common Issues

- Mismanaging time: spending too long on early questions.

- Poor grasp of chronology. Candidates included irrelevant material outside timeframe of question and this also wasted examination time. [e.g. Munich Putsch in 2A, q2a; 1930s purges in 2B q2b;First New Deal in 2Cq2a].

Common Issues continued

- Lack of precise knowledge - most notably of the 1936 constitution in option 2B q 1b. Candidates must be prepared for a question on any specified material. Question 1b in 2A was also poorly done.

- Lack of focus: candidates drifted too readily into narrative in questions 1 (c) 1 (d) and 2 (a) and (b) – where an explanatory focus is required for high-level reward.

- Asserted or ineffective prioritisation in question 3.

Answering the 1(a) questions: AO3 4 marks

- One clear inference with supporting information from the source is sufficient for full marks:

  'I can infer/ learn that .... because the source says ....'

- No evaluation of the source for reliability is required.

- Knowledge should be used to understand the context and make the inference NOT to support the inference.

- Paraphrases will gain only Level 1, 1 mark.

1(a) Writing too much

- Answers to 1(a) were often too long.
- Students who wrote too much in answer to early questions left themselves too little time to do justice to the extended answer in question 3.
- Three examples for question 1 (a) follow. All three gained maximum marks.
- Answer 2 earned full marks by the middle of line 4.
- Answer 3 earned full marks by the beginning of line 4.

Student Responses: Level three

Source A: From a history of Germany, published in 2009.

> The Weimar Republic was set up as a democracy. This was completely different from Germany's tradition of having one strong ruler. The Weimar Republic was seen by many Germans as being set up by the 'November Criminals' who had stabbed Germany in the back. So they thought the Weimar Republic needed to be destroyed and replaced by a one-party state.

(a) What can you learn from Source A about the Weimar Republic?

(4)

From source A I can learn that the weimar ~~a~~ Republic was very unpopular. This is because the source states that 'the weimar Republic needed to be destroyed.'

Source A: From a history of the modern world, published in 2000.

> Stalin introduced education reforms. Schools were told which textbooks to use, formal examinations were reintroduced and Communist ideology became a compulsory subject. By the end of the 1930s there was an emphasis on traditional values, including compulsory pigtails for girls. Higher education focused on technical and scientific learning to meet the needs of the Five-Year Plans.

(a) What can you learn from Source A about the Soviet Union in the 1930s?

(4)

You can learn that the Soviet Union was under complete state control. The introduction of education reforms by Stalin showed that the state ~~to~~ was forced to be mainly communist. ~~and~~ The fact that Stalin made higher education focus on technical and scientific learning showed that he was thinking ahead and everything done was ~~to~~ eventually beneficial to what he wanted. This showed that Russia was based on Stalin's own interests

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Source A: From a history of the modern world, published in 2001.

> Al Capone had 700 men armed with shotguns and sub-machine guns. He bribed police, judges and politicians in Chicago. Capone's photograph appeared on the front cover of *Time*, America's leading weekly magazine. He mixed with businessmen, politicians and movie stars. The only charge the authorities could make stick against him was tax evasion.

(a) What can you learn from Source A about gangsterism in the USA?

(4)

I can learn that gangsterism corrupted the American law system in the 1920s, as shown by "he bribed police, judges and politicians". I can also learn that some gangsters were quite (in)famous, and well-known to celebrities and media, shown by "he mixed with businessmen, politicians and movie stars", and "Capone's photograph appeared on the front cover of Time". Gangsterism was also hard to crack down as possibly, shown by "the only charge the authorities could make stick against him was tax evasion".

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Answering the 1(b) questions

- The question target is: Recall of Knowledge/ Key features. (AO1 and AO2). It may ask directly for key features, or ask for problems, losses, aims, etc.

- The markscheme awards L1 1-3 for simple statements; L2 4-6 for developed statements.

- A developed statement is a point plus supporting information.

- Two well developed statements can score full marks.

'One feature .... Another feature....'

1(b) Continued

- Question 1(b) was poorly answered in options 2A and 2B.

- 2A 1(b): confusion about Germany's territorial losses in the Treaty of Versailles - references to the Ruhr being lost, the Saar demilitarised and Belgium being given access to the sea.

- 2B 1(b): many blank answers, little known about the 1936 Constitution although it is a specified element.

1(b) Continued

- The 1(b) questions are relatively straightforward for candidates, requiring only developed statements, but precise and relevant information is required.

- The best responses, as in the following example, wrote two paragraphs, clearly organising the answer into separate features or statements.

One key feature of the 1936 Constitution ~~was~~ was the rights and reforms it laid out to be achieved. The Constitution, focusing on democracy and in particular the communist view of an ideal democracy, ~~emphasised~~ set out rights such as the right to vote and the right to free speech and press. These were seen as essential components in creating the perfect society under communist principle. Many of these rights were, in fact, ignored or presented in a way different to how they were carried out – for example although everybody had the right to free speech in theory, this was often ignored in the interests of 'national security'.

A second key feature was it's use as propaganda abroad. Although the Constitution was often ignored or manipulated at home in the USSR, it's presentation to the outside world and in particular to the capitalists in the west was primarily one for propaganda. As such it was praised as being – as, in theory, it was – 'the most democratic system in the world.' This was an attempt to stop the growing mistrust of communism abroad and present the USSR in a positive light.

1(c) and 1(d) Explanation of consequence and causation

- These 8-mark question have an additional level. Level three requires explanation.

- Explanation differs from development in that it requires candidates to emphasise the nature of the impact and show how causes operated. It is one ‘step’ further than development.

- Many candidates are strong on ‘what happened’. They tell the story and may give extensive and impressive information – but this is Level 2 development , not Level 3 explanation.

- One effect / cause well explained can get 7 marks. Linked / prioritised explanations are always awarded 8 marks.

1d – extract from an example of good question technique

(d) Explain why Hitler became Chancellor of Germany in January 1933.

(8)

The fist reason why he became chancellor was thanks to the wall street crash in 1929. This period of depression was used by Hitler ~~so~~ to promise prosperity and wealth to the Germany. This meant that people began to turn away from the Weimar Republic government at that time and look for new leadership.

In conclusion Hitler was made chancellor out of desperation in a time of great promises where Hitler seemed to have all the answers.

Why Candidate did well
Summary

- A clear point initially made, showing focus on the question. It was followed by relevant material, sufficient to make the point stand up. The language of causal analysis is clearly seen: ‘thanks to...’ ; ‘this meant that...’ ‘out of desperation...

2A 1(d) A level 2 response

Hitler became Chancellor of Germany mainly through political intrigue however also because he was voted in.

The Chancellor of Germany was always the leader of the party with the most seats in parliament. In the most recent elections the Nazis became the largest party and so Hitler was meant to be the next chancellor however Hindenberg did not allow it. Although he did not get the job this way he was now in line for it.

Other politicians did not agree with Hitler becoming Chancellor however in the end one man decided that they would make Hitler Chancellor because he thought that they could control him. The previous chancellor agreed to this and so did Hindenberg. They then gave ~~to~~ Hitler chancellorship making the mistake of thinking they could control him

Why Candidate did less well
Summary

- Narrative style response
- Lack of specificity in supporting detail
- The opening statement offers causes, but these remain assertions which are not fully explained

Question 2 – the process or nature of change

- Candidates are asked to explain how something happened or what changed.
- The target is not causation, although candidates often try to offer causal explanations here.
- In a ‘change’ question, examiners look for the language of comparison – more, greater, improved, weaker, less, still, etc.
- In ‘process’ questions, examiners look for the language of impact and outcomes – ‘by doing [xxxx], he increased...’; in order to do this, he...;

Question 2 Markscheme

The structure follows that of 1(c), but with a focus on change or process instead of consequence

L1 1-2 Simple statement(s)
1 mark per simple statement

L2 3-5 Developed statement(s) of ways or changes
3-4 marks for one developed statement
4-5 marks for two or more developed statements

L3 Developed explanation of ways or changes
6-7 marks for one or more explained statements
8 marks for answers which show links

An extract from a response awarded level two.

Paper 2A q2(a)

Explain how the Weimar Republic dealt with attacks from right-wing and left-wing groups in the years 1919-22. (8)

The first part of the answer dealt with the Spartacists; the student goes on to deal with the Kapp Putsch.

Another example is the Kapp Putsch in ~~1920~~ 1922.
An extreme nationalist, Wolfgang Kapp, wanted to seize power in Berlin and overthrow the Weimar government. He was furious for the government for signing the Treaty of Versailles and wanted a ruler like the Kaiser to take over and make Germany strong again.
When Kapp and his nationalist supporters attempted to seize power in Berlin, they were not supported and the factory workers in the city went on strike in favour of the government. After only few days Kapp and his supporters fled.

These examples not only show that the Weimar Republic were quick, efficient and brutal at dealing with attacks on the government, but were also liked (at this stage) by the workers and people of Germany and this helped them to deal with attackers, as in the case of the Kapp Putsch.

(Total for Question 2 = 8 marks)

Why Candidate remained in level two

- The defeat of each of the uprisings was described well. The final paragraph attempted to draw general conclusions about ‘ways’, but the comments are not valid; the government was not 'quick, efficient and brutal' and the events did not show that in both cases the Weimar Republic was liked by workers and people. Hence the answer was awarded Level 2.

An extract from a response awarded level three

Paper 2C q 2(b)

Explain the changes in the US economy from the beginning of the Second New Deal (1935) to 1941 (8)

completely recovered. However, by 1939 with the beginning of the Second World War FDR increased spending on rearmaments and he introduce "Cash and Carry" schemes by which Allied forces were allowed to buy military equipment so long as this was transported by Allied ships. Later FDR initiated "~~Ca~~ Lend Lease" schemes by which Allied forces ~~could~~ were given equipment but ~~had to~~ could pay later. This created a huge demand for military equipment, which increased employment in US factories as the economy began to recover. However, there were still 6 million unemployed by 1941, evidence that the Second New Deal failed to solve the problems of the US economy and it was the Second World War which solved these problems.

Question 3: extended answer requiring judgment

- The question can target evaluation of causation, consequence, change or even key features (e.g. Was .... the main problem facing....').
- It requires the skills required in questions 1 and 2, but with additional demands.
- Linkage and the ability to make and support a judgment are key.
- Assertion of importance is insufficient; criteria for judgment must be given and supported, and direct comparisons should be made to support statements of relative importance.
- Bullet point stimulus is provided, but does not have to be used.

Interpreting the mark scheme

L1: writing about the topic but not addressing the question

L2: providing the information to support the bullet points or own factor

L3: (lower) providing explanation of how the bullet points (or own factors) contributed to the outcome stated (as in 1c, 1d and 2)

L3: (upper) and **L 4:** prioritisation, linkage etc. The more factors addressed, the higher the reward.15-16 marks: Illustrates that one most important factor could not provide a satisfactory explanation

Attempting to prioritise

How successful was Stresemann in dealing with the problems faced by the Weimar Republic in the Years 1924-9?

Explain your answer (16)

Overall I think the main success was the hyperinflation because ~~it~~ Stresemann enabled Germany to get back on track and carry on their industry. Second main feature was the Young Plan because it ~~to~~ reduced reparations which was good for Germany. I ~~f~~ didn't find relations with other countries important because I think France was still angry with Germany so if there were a tension they would've been in opposite sides.

ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

Before the last paragraph the answer has clearly explained why Stresemann was successful in more than one area and so ws marked at Level 3, 10 marks.

This final paragraph is an attempt to prioritise, saying the measures against hyperinflation were the most important, then the Young Plan, but relations with other countries were not important. The answer merely asserts the prioritisation and does not compare importance, just puts it in order. So only one additional mark was gained (Level 3, 11marks) as there is no direct comparison.

Making comparisons and sustaining judgement

Overall, Stressemann stopping hyperinflation was his most important achievement as without this, Germany would never have been able to recover. However, Germany would not have been trusted or treated fairly without stressemann improving international relations, so this was fairly important too. If stressemann had not signed the Locarno Pact then the French may never have left the ~~Rather~~ Ruhr and Germanys industry would have been prevented from increasing, which would have made paying reparations even more difficult. Despite solving hyperinflation stabilising Germanys economy, if reparations had not been reduced to an affordable level, then no matter how strong Germanys economy was, it would not have been able to repay its debt. Therefore, hyperinflation was Stressemanns key success as it gave Germanys economy a chance to increase and made sure that Germany had the chance to focus on other important factors such as improving country relations.

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Issues which prevent candidates from doing well

Summary

- Poor time management or exam technique
- Confusion of events or individuals
- Inattention to key dates in the question
- Lack of focus on the analytical demands of the question
- Asserted, not supported, judgements in question 3

SPaG in 2013

- From January 2013, unit 2 will be marked out of 57
- Question 2 will be worth 8+3 for SPaG
- Question 3 will be worth 16 + 4 for SPaG

Revised SAMs are available on
http://www.edexcel.com/quals/gcse/gcse09/history/a/Pages/default.aspx

Guide to SPaG
http://www.edexcel.com/migrationdocuments/GCSE%20New%20GCSE/SPaG_History_A.pdf

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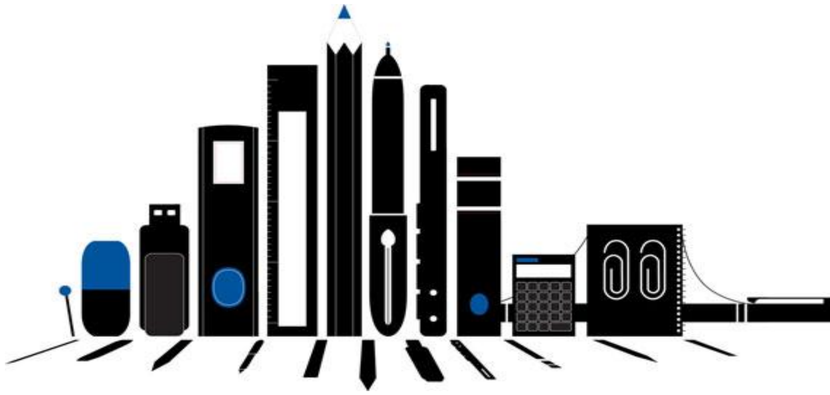
Results statistics summarise the overall grade outcomes of candidates sitting Edexcel examinations.



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