



GCSE Examiners' Report

History
GCSE
Summer 2024

Introduction

Our Principal examiners' report provides valuable feedback on the recent assessment series. It has been written by our Principal Examiners and Principal Moderators after the completion of marking and moderation, and details how candidates have performed in each unit.

This report opens with a summary of candidates' performance, including the assessment objectives/skills/topics/themes being tested, and highlights the characteristics of successful performance and where performance could be improved. It then looks in detail at each unit, pinpointing aspects that proved challenging to some candidates and suggesting some reasons as to why that might be.¹

The information found in this report provides valuable insight for practitioners to support their teaching and learning activity. We would also encourage practitioners to share this document – in its entirety or in part – with their learners to help with exam preparation, to understand how to avoid pitfalls and to add to their revision toolbox.

Further support

Document	Description	Link
Professional Learning / CPD	WJEC offers an extensive programme of online and face-to-face Professional Learning events. Access interactive feedback, review example candidate responses, gain practical ideas for the classroom and put questions to our dedicated team by registering for one of our events here.	https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/professional-learning/
Past papers	Access the bank of past papers for this qualification, including the most recent assessments. Please note that we do not make past papers available on the public website until 12 months after the examination.	Portal by WJEC or on the WJEC subject page
Grade boundary information	Grade boundaries are the minimum number of marks needed to achieve each grade. For unitised specifications grade boundaries are expressed on a Uniform Mark Scale (UMS). UMS grade boundaries remain the same every year as the range of UMS mark percentages allocated to a particular grade does not change. UMS grade boundaries are published at overall subject and unit level. For linear specifications, a single grade is awarded for the subject, rather than for each unit that contributes towards the overall grade. Grade boundaries are published on results day.	For unitised specifications click here: Results, Grade Boundaries and PRS (wjec.co.uk)

¹ Please note that where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

Exam Results Analysis	WJEC provides information to examination centres via the WJEC Portal. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.	Portal by WJEC
Classroom Resources	Access our extensive range of FREE classroom resources, including blended learning materials, exam walk-throughs and knowledge organisers to support teaching and learning.	https://resources.wjec.co.uk/
Bank of Professional Learning materials	Access our bank of Professional Learning materials from previous events from our secure website and additional pre-recorded materials available in the public domain.	Portal by WJEC or on the WJEC subject page.
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Contents

	Page
Executive summary	5
Unit 1: Studies in Depth – Wales and Wider Perspective	7
Unit 2: Studies in Depth – European/World Focus	9
Unit 3: Thematic Studies	12
Unit 4: Working as an historian	17
Supporting you – useful contacts and links	19

Executive Summary

Candidates in Unit 1 faced specific challenges. For question 2, many struggled to fully discuss the strengths and limitations of sources, including attribution and relevant contextual knowledge. Question 3 responses need to emphasise the significance of factors rather than listing them. Question 4 requires a detailed explanation of how all three chosen features interconnect. High-scoring responses effectively linked the topics with precise factual knowledge in the correct historical context. Candidates should focus on explaining connections in detail, as AO2 carries significant weight. For question 5, while many demonstrated strong interpretation and contextual understanding, critical analysis, including attribution and alternative perspectives remains essential for higher marks.

Candidates showed solid historical knowledge/analytical skills in Unit 2. To achieve higher marks, candidates should enhance their use of AO1/AO3 by integrating detailed contextual knowledge and effective source analysis. Some missed referencing sources in question 1, impacting AO3. Many performed well in question 2 with Band 3 responses but struggled with in-depth analysis in question 3 and source attribution in question 4. Question 4 answers often lacked engagement with attribution and audience, limiting many to Band 2. Question 5 responses need to better address the question directly with detailed explanations. Many provided imbalanced/weak judgements due to insufficient analysis and contextualisation. Further guidance on developing explanations in relation to the question would be beneficial. SPaG scores were mostly commendable.

Unit 3 candidates demonstrated strong historical understanding, especially in question 1. While most performed well in question 2, some struggled with precise source details and accurate identification of similarities and differences. Responses to question 3 lacked full description. Question 4, varied in quality with generalised responses lacking specific details, particularly in Welsh contexts. Question 5 saw explanations rather than descriptions with many achieving Band 2 for AO1/Band 3 for AO2, few reached Band 4 due to insufficient contextual depth. Question 6 showed good contextual knowledge but lacked the necessary analysis for Band 4. Question 7 faced timing and coverage issues, especially in modern eras. Improved focus on Welsh examples and detailed analysis are recommended for higher marks.

The standard in Unit 4 was notably high, with an increase in word-processed submissions. Most candidates adhered to the recommended length, producing focused answers. Many centres used only selected sources, leading to similar and mechanistic responses in parts (a) and (b). In part (a), while source evaluations were generally coherent, some relied too heavily on content without critical integration. For part (b), there was often an over-awarding of AO4, effective answers need deeper analysis and judgment on interpretations. Consistency in marking and careful submission procedures are crucial for the moderation process.

Areas for improvement	Classroom resources	Brief description of resource
Historical knowledge and understanding	Unit 1 Unit 2 Unit 3 Student Planner	Knowledge organisers and student planner to guide candidates through blended learning resources.
GCSE History Skills	Resource WJEC Educational Resources Website	Teaching and learning resources
Exam skills	Resource WJEC Educational Resources Website	Exam Walkthroughs
Revision	Resource WJEC Educational Resources Website	Free revision sessions

HISTORY

GCSE

Summer 2024

UNIT 1: STUDIES IN DEPTH – WALES AND THE WIDER PERSPECTIVES

Overview of the Unit

- Handwriting of some candidates continues to be poor. Where handwriting is observably poor, it may be worthwhile investigating if a candidate is permitted to use a word processor to complete their studies and then make use of that technology in the examination.
- Candidates must provide valid references to strengths and limitations in question 2 and make appropriate comments regarding attribution/authorship.
- In question 3, focus more on explaining the significance of various relevant factors rather than listing and describing them.
- Responses need to focus on explaining each connection between all three chosen features identified by the candidates in question 4.
- Candidates should carefully read the italicized guidance for question 5 and address how and why alternative interpretations of the issue might arise. Responses should avoid generic comments and focus on specific, detailed analysis of authorships and perspectives.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Question 1

In this question, candidates are given two sources and are asked to describe an issue by using both. Candidates should use both sources equally and should be taking two detailed points from each in order to gain the highest marks. Most candidates dealt with this question very well, showed sound understanding of the sources to be discussed and were therefore able to achieve Band 2 marks. Very few candidates included own knowledge on the topics and focused correctly on source extraction only. Similar to last year many candidates were weaker in their analysis of visual sources resulting in an imbalanced response and were unable to gain full marks.

Question 2

In this question candidates are expected to explain a topic using the source provided. Candidates must explain the validity of the source in relation to its content, authorship, date, audience and purpose, with evidence of detailed use of the attribution required to achieve the highest marks. In order to reach Band 3 candidates must include accurate understanding of the strengths and limitations of the source in relation to the question's focus.

Most candidates were able to provide a good explanation of the validity of the source, with its content discussed, and background knowledge of the issues presented. The majority of candidates were able to offer responses that discussed the content of the source well with sound understanding of its strengths. Few candidates were able to fully address the source and attribution together with appropriate contextual knowledge.

Question 3

This question is one that will test candidates' knowledge of a topic and their ability to explain the significance of it. Most candidates' responses were able to achieve Band 3 on both AO1 and AO2 by displaying understanding of the key issue supported by relevant background knowledge. Most responses provided at least two examples to demonstrate the candidates' understanding of the issue set. Candidates that offered a full explanation focused on the significance of at least three relevant issues were able to gain the highest marks.

Question 4

Similar to last year the majority of responses attempted to explain the links between chosen features as the question requires. However, too many candidates were focused on offering one clear link. Many answers on the Depression, War and Recovery paper explained the link between the chosen topics as all contributing to the depression and were unable to progress above Band 2 marks for AO2. Candidates who explained the links between all three chosen topics were able to access marks at Band 3 and Band 4.

As in previous years a range of responses were offered:

- Some candidates chose their three factors and linked them all together in one explanation.
- Other candidates explained two separate connections, covering three factors as required by the question.
- Many chose to make three or even four connections, sometimes covering all of the factors at least once.
- Some responses took the form of 'X links to Y' without an explanation of the connection
- Some connections identified were generic, for example 'X, Y and Z are all connected because they are about

The highest-scoring responses identified clear links between the topics chosen, supported by precise factual knowledge within the correct historical context. As in previous years candidates should approach this question focused on explaining the connections between each of the chosen features as the marks are weighted towards AO2.

Question 5

This question is aimed at assessing each candidate's ability to discuss historical interpretations. They are expected to discuss how far they agree with the interpretation given by discussing what the content of the source tells them about the subject, ensuring that they incorporate an in-depth discussion of the source's attribution (which is essential). Relevant factors to include are the author of the interpretation, the nature of the interpretation (that is, what form the interpretation takes), when it was produced. For what purpose, and its likely audience. Candidates must also suggest different interpretations to that given in the question. In essence, candidates must:

- Discuss the interpretation in the question
- Explain how that interpretation has been reached (with reference to a discussion of the attribution)
- Suggest different interpretations.

Many good quality responses were seen across the different options. Candidates were able to explain the given interpretation with reference to content and wider contextual knowledge. Similarly to last year a small number of candidates approached the question as a source evaluation without focusing on interpretation.

HISTORY

GCSE

Summer 2024

UNIT 2: STUDIES IN DEPTH – HISTORY WITH A EUROPEAN/WORLD FOCUS

Overview of the Unit

- Generally, the papers for Unit 2 performed as expected with most candidates answering each of the questions with good knowledge of the key features of the questions. Candidates also demonstrated the ability to deploy different historical skills to analyse and evaluate source material before reaching a judgement in their answers. Candidates were clearly aware of the different Assessment Objectives and were able to gain higher marks accordingly.
- Most candidates were able to finish all questions in the time provided. Where they did not, it may be worthwhile offering some additional timing support to such students. A lengthy response to a low-tariff question is not a good use of a candidate's time.
- We would encourage candidates to demonstrate their knowledge more effectively: AO1 is awarded for every question; and is a good source of marks for those aiming to reach the higher end of the bands.
- Similarly, AO3 can provide marks for future candidates who make sure that they comment effectively on the content and attribution of the sources.
- By and large, candidates were able to show their knowledge and understanding of the topics to a good standard, analysing different historical issues throughout the set papers.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Question 1

Most candidates successfully analysed the source within the correct historical context and identified several valid points from the source, thus accessing band 2 full marks for AO3. Many lower ability candidates were able to utilise the source through its content only which allowed them to access Band 1. Unfortunately, a minority of candidates did not provide any reference to the source and, as such, were unable to be credited any AO3 marks. For AO1, many candidates accessed marks in Band 1, bringing in their own relevant knowledge related to the question set. Some candidates demonstrated impressive knowledge and were awarded full marks. Overall, however, this was a well-answered question that used both the source and candidates' own knowledge in all papers.

Question 2

Overall, nearly all candidates were able to attempt this question; the majority accessed Band 2 by offering two points to partially describe the issue at hand. Many candidates demonstrated detailed knowledge and Band 3 answers were not uncommon with some candidates demonstrating very detailed knowledge which was well developed. In the Germany paper, quite a few candidates, however, did also include (although not solely focus on) economic and social achievements which consequently left the foreign policy aspects undeveloped. Across the options, most candidates developed at least one issue. Responses that did not provide enough detail to support the argument being made were rewarded with either low-Band 3 or top-Band 2 marks.

As always, candidates should aim to describe three issues in detail when tackling this question, and they must remain within the parameters of the question.

Question 3

Nearly all candidates attempted this question, although very few managed to reach Band 3 for either assessment objective. Many candidates partially analysed the source and reached a judgement on purpose, i.e. 'to spread anti-semitism to young people/brainwash them' in the Germany paper, or 'to get more Americans to buy consumer goods' in the USA paper, but very few developed this further with developed reasons for their production. Those candidates who accessed Band 3 on AO3 identified the target audience of the source and gave a more developed explanation as to its purpose. For AO1, many demonstrated some knowledge of the historical context on the topics. Although most responses indicated an accurate understanding of the historical context in relation to the source, they also lacked balance and/or detail to achieve Band 3. Overall, to gain higher marks candidates need more specific historical context and more developed explanations of the purpose of the source, focusing on the intended audience and the circumstances of the source's existence.

Question 4

Overall, many candidates accessed Band 2 for AO3 as they successfully engaged with the content of both sources whilst attempting an evaluating the utility of the attributions; many were able to analyse the usefulness of a diary and the limitations of a speech in the Germany paper, and the relative utility of a KKK speech and an article by the NAACP in the USA paper. Few candidates accessed Band 3 as they did not fully engage with the attribution and audience, and then did not arrive at a substantiated judgment. Some candidates accessed Band 2 by discussing the utility of the sources in a mechanistic way: they made some valid comments as to the utility of the sources but did not make the substantiated judgements that were seen in Band 3 responses. Nearly all candidates offered a judgement on which source was most useful, but in many cases justifications for their choice were often weak. However, AO1 was somewhat disappointing overall with few candidates bringing in enough of their own knowledge beyond the content of each source; thus, many candidates failed to achieve beyond Band 1 here. It is recommended that candidates provide two clear and detailed factors that support the content and the provenance of the sources. This will enable them to achieve higher marks for AO1. Across all the optional papers, some candidates offered detailed knowledge of the key feature in the question, but many others did not develop their understanding of the relevant context at AO1. Overall, candidates must demonstrate greater understanding of the historical context of the sources and offer a more developed explanation of the authorship to progress further up the mark bands.

Question 5

Most candidates showed detailed contextual knowledge to support their answers, but many of them did not develop a response that directly answered the question set. This resulted in imbalanced and/or weak judgments being applied, with basic or partial analysis of the key issue. Some candidates listed factors and failed to analyse them in the correct context of the question set. Many candidates, however, demonstrated some very impressive knowledge and were awarded with full marks in AO1. Many candidates produced a two-sided response, thus accessing Band 2 for AO2, most, however, were able to access Band 3 through a partial analysis of a range of factors. Some went on to reach a well substantiated judgement, which is essential to achieve Band 4 in AO2. It is important that candidates stay within the confines of the specification in this question. In the Germany paper, it was noted that some candidates strayed from this and missed some crucial factors. Further, in all options, some candidates only described each event without attempting an explanation of how it had an impact on the issue at hand. It seems that, overall, candidates would benefit from further assistance in focusing on developing an explanation in relation to the question. With reference to Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG) marks, generally, candidates scored well, which was pleasing to observe.

HISTORY

GCSE

Summer 2024

UNIT 3: THEMATIC STUDIES FROM A BROAD HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Overview of the Unit

- There are four options examined in Unit 3. Changes in Crime and Punishment, c.1500 to the present day; Changes in Health and Medicine, c.1340 to the present day; The Development of Warfare, c.1250 to the present day; Changes in Patterns of Migration, c.1500 to the present day
- The vast majority of candidates are examined on the Crime and Punishment and Changes in Health and Medicine with a small cohort entered for the Warfare and Migration papers.
- Each the optioned examined focused extensively on second order historical concepts including continuity, change, cause, consequence, significance, similarity and difference.
- Some excellent responses have been seen this year with many candidates showing knowledge and understanding of the changes and continuity across the periods studied.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Question 1

This question was generally well-answered. Most candidates were able to recall all or most of the required answers. There were very few candidates who failed to provide answers to all four parts of the question.

Question 2

This question requires candidates to identify one similarity and one difference. There was an improvement here this year, it was evident that most centres had focused on the recommended exam technique, with candidates providing one clearly defined similarity and one clearly defined difference, with sources identified for both. This led to the most successful responses. However, some candidates are still losing marks on this question, for various reasons.

- Some are going into far more depth than is required e.g. describing the sources and then providing a similarity and a difference. Many described the sources rather than pointing out the similarities and differences.
- Some are using their own knowledge instead of using the sources, as the question demands.
- Some not naming and identifying the sources used.
- Some are simply paraphrasing the wording of the question e.g. Sources B and C are different because they show changes in methods of combatting crime over time.
- Many describe the similarities and differences but make the same point.

Question 3

This question requires a descriptive answer and was generally well-answered. As in 2023, most candidates demonstrated enough knowledge to take them into Band 2. There were very few who scored nothing on this question. Equally, there were also relatively few who got into Band 3, mainly because they did not fully describe the issue, as the band descriptors demand.

- **Crime and Punishment:** many candidates were able to describe the crime of vagrancy in the sixteenth century. Many could reach Band 2 referencing the reasons for vagrancy and the different types of vagrants. The crime of vagrancy is well known, and the majority of candidates were able to describe this well. The better candidates were able to give examples of different types of Vagrants such as the Abraham Man and describe how they were punished. Few reached Band 3 as answers lacked enough detail.
- **Health and Medicine:** a majority of candidates were able to describe the work of Andreas Vesalius in the sixteenth century. Most were able to access Band 2 however few reached Band 3 as answers lacked enough detail.
- **Warfare:** answers were varied. Many gave good responses with reference to the different causes of the Civil War; however, many answers were generalised. Most candidates were able to access Band 2 however few reached Band 3 as answers lacked enough detail
- **Migration:** answers were varied. Many described movement to Britain in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as opposed to the reasons for EU immigration to Britain in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

Question 4

Across all four thematic studies this question was on the Welsh historic site. This question also requires a descriptive answer. As with Question 3, there were very few candidates who got no marks at all, with the majority of answers in Band 2 (for much the same reasons as in Question 3). However, the quality of responses was more varied across the four thematic studies.

- **Crime and Punishment:** most candidates were aware that changes in policing occurred in Merthyr however responses here tended to be a description of crime in Merthyr itself. Very few could give specific details of the development of policing in Merthyr, so again a lack of Band 3 answers. Better candidates referred to the appointment of 3 former Metropolitan police officers following the Merthyr Rising and the establishment of the Glamorgan County Constabulary in 1841.
- **Health and Medicine:** responses here tended to be a general description of living conditions in towns with very few candidates being able to give examples that were specific to Cardiff. Candidates tended to focus on cholera with very few also mentioning typhoid so again a lack of Band 3 answers. Very few candidates were able to give examples that were specific to Cardiff so there was a lack of Band 3 answers.
- **Warfare:** this question was well answered with most candidates able to access Band 2. Detailed examples were given of any two sieges of Harlech castle. Most were able to access Band 2 however few reached Band 3 as answers lacked enough detail.
- **Migration:** this question was well answered with most candidates able to access Band 2. Detailed examples were given of the problems faced by Welsh settlers in Patagonia.

Question 5

To get into Band 2 for AO1 and Band 3 for AO2, candidates were required to provide specific references to the set enquiry, rather than a more general knowledge and explanation. Most candidates were focused on explanation, rather than simply providing a descriptive answer. This meant that many candidates got into Band 2 for AO1 and Band 3 for AO2. However, there were relatively few who hit Band 4 for AO2, mainly due to the lack of detailed historical context.

- **Crime and Punishment:** some excellent responses were seen with many candidates demonstrating good detail and knowledge about why alternative methods of punishment for offenders were introduced in the twentieth century, however many candidates did not focus on the twentieth century. A great deal of answers discussed prison reforms of the nineteenth century and the end of the Bloody Code. Those that did focus all or part of their answer on the twentieth century tended to focus on Borstals and Community Service. Answers tended to be descriptive with very few candidates explaining why alternative methods of punishments were introduced. This limited most answers to Band 2. Many candidates focussed on the period before the twentieth century and as such lost focus on what the question required.
- **Health and Medicine:** most candidates were able to describe the living conditions in the medieval period. However, there was a lack of explanation of how these conditions caused illness and disease. There were very few answers at Band 4 as they described rather than explained.
- **Warfare:** this question was generally well answered with many candidates demonstrating good detail and knowledge of the reasons why the development of trench warfare during the First World War led to high casualty rates. Many candidates were able to access Band 3 in AO2 however there were relatively few Band 4 responses seen.
- **Migration:** most answers focussed on the religious and economic movement from Britain to America in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These answers were mostly able to reach Band 2 and above in AO2. General comments and undeveloped responses here were kept at Band 1. Many candidates were able to access Band 3 in AO2 however there were relatively few Band 4 responses seen.

Question 6

There were few candidates who failed to access at least Band 1 for AO1. For AO2 most candidates also made some attempt to analyse the significance of the set issue but, as with Question 5, it was the quality of contextual support that differentiated lower band responses from the fuller analysis that is required for Bands 3 and 4.

- **Crime and Punishment:** there were some good answers but overall, the question was not answered as well as had been expected. Relatively few candidates went beyond Band 2 on AO2. Some answers were mainly descriptive. Many candidates described the condition in industrial towns without linking this to how this led to the cause of crime. Many cited Merthyr and an example of a rapidly going industrial town and made reference to China but failed to link it to the question. Many discussed protests in this era, but this was generalised and did not focus on specific urban protests such as the Luddites and the Chartists and how these were linked to the growth industrial towns. Many trawled through all the protests including the Swing riots and Rebecca. There were very few Band 3 and 4 answers.

- **Health and Medicine:** many answers lacked detail and explanation. Many candidates knew the work of Simpson and Lister and were able to describe their work. Most candidates did describe the work of both. Many candidates were able to describe the work of Simpson and Lister well and how this work improved surgical techniques. Some candidates were able to explain their long-term significance, but most answers were descriptive in nature. Therefore, did not reach Band 3 and 4.
- **Warfare:** many answers lacked detail and explanation of the significance of industrialisation in changing weaponry during the nineteenth century. Generalised comments were made about the development of production methods. The better answers had specific dates and references to the nineteenth century.
- **Migration:** most candidates had a general idea of the significance of the Irish emigration to the US in the nineteenth century however failed to provide the detailed historical support needed to access the higher bands. Relatively few candidates went beyond Band 2 on AO2.

Question 7

It was clear that candidates clearly understood the need to cover all three historical periods however there tended to be an imbalance and the modern era was generally not as well covered as the two earlier eras. Many candidates also discussed variations in the extent of change over time.

While many candidates do give Welsh examples from all 3 periods, there are still a significant number that still do not give specific Welsh examples. This therefore capped those candidates at Band 2- 2 marks for AO1. While still able to reach the higher bands for AO2, there needs to be clearer focus on Welsh examples to score in AO1.

Though there were some excellent responses to this question, there were relatively few candidates who achieved Band 4, particularly for AO2. Timing remains an issue for many candidates. In many cases candidates wrote in great detail on the medieval/early modern era, while references to the modern era showed signs of being rushed. This results in an unbalanced response which, in turn, has an impact on the final mark.

- **Crime and Punishment:** most candidates were able to explain the changes in law enforcement and policing over time, but very few focused on the responsibility for law enforcement that was needed to access Band 3 and 4. The best candidates analysed the move from community policing through to policing being the responsibility of the government in the modern period, whilst still relying on some elements of community policing such as PCSOs. Many candidates incorrectly focused on punishment as part of their answer with some While many candidates do give Welsh examples from all 3 periods, there are still a significant number that still do not give specific Welsh examples. This therefore capped those candidates at Band 2- 2 marks for AO1. While still able to reach the higher bands for AO2, there needs to be clearer focus on Welsh examples to score in AO1. Very few candidates included meaningful Welsh references – the most common being the formation of the Glamorgan Constabulary in 1841. The majority of candidates stayed at Band 2 for AO1. There was a clear lack of meaningful Welsh references in many answers.

- **Health and Medicine:** candidates seemed to have difficulty in focusing on the 'prevention' element of this question. Candidates tended to discuss improvements in medicine in general but weren't specific enough on prevention. The majority of candidates did include Edward Jenner and his work on vaccinations, and many were able to say how vaccinations had continued to be developed (very few mentioning the Covid vaccination). Very few candidates reached Band 4 as they were not fully focused on the key issue and did not discuss variations in improvement. Very few candidates made reference to the Welsh context at all, or in any meaningful way, so the majority of candidates stayed at Band 2 for AO1. Any Welsh references tended to be of the physicians of Myddfai. Answers seem to be quite general on the whole with the specific detail needed to support answers and show detailed historical knowledge lacking.
- **Warfare:** candidates seemed to have a reasonable understanding of how the role of women in war has changed over time. Some good answers were seen with clear Welsh examples given. Very few candidates reached Band 4 in AO2 as they did not discuss the extent of change in detail. Some candidates made no reference to the Welsh context at all, or in any meaningful way, therefore many of candidates stayed at Band 2 for AO1
- **Migration:** candidates showed some knowledge of how the experiences of immigrants into the UK have been positive over time. However, there was a tendency with some to lose focus and to drift into a discussion of the reasons for moving to Britain as opposed to the experience of Immigrants to the UK. Examples of the Welsh Context were seen which enabled many candidates to access Band 3 in AO1. Better answers were able to discuss the extent of the positive and negative experience of migrants. Very few candidates reached Band 4 in AO2 as they did not discuss the extent of the impact in any meaningful detail.

UNIT 4: WORKING AS AN HISTORIAN

Overview of the Unit

The work presented was of a good standard with no obvious difference in the quality of work in comparison with previous years.

- The vast majority of Centres opted for the NEA exercises produced by the Board. Most of the work was handwritten, however there was an increase in the number of word-processed pieces.
- On the whole, work was of a reasonable and sensible length. Centres that adhered to the recommended time limit for the 'write up' succeeded in producing more focussed and relevant answers.

One notable point this year is that more centres seem to have only studied select sources from the source packs.

- This resulted in work becoming very similar and mechanistic in both parts (a) and (b).
- AO3 in part (a) and AO4 in part (b), both require candidates to select sources to access band 3 and 4 marks.

Tasks

Comments on tasks/questions relating to candidate performance/meeting assessment criteria

Part (a)

On the whole Part (a) was done well with candidates discussing the usefulness and reliability of their chosen sources. Many candidates successfully produced coherent pieces of prose with source evaluation integrated in the answer. However, some candidates' responses were mainly led by the content of the sources. Candidates should answer the question set using the sources critically in support of their answers. For example, the question on women in the First World War should show how the war affected women by reference to greater work opportunity, working in munitions factories, on farms and as nurses or similar and introduce the sources in support. Answers to part (a) requires a conclusion clearly addressing the question.

There is still a tendency to reward any reference to utility and reliability, even if it is incorrect or irrelevant to the question. Candidates need to indicate what a source is useful or reliable for. There was some generosity in awarding AO3 especially at the top band. Too many candidates were awarded Band 4 for work that clearly did not merit it. There was, also an increase in candidates merely selecting four sources and discussing and evaluating them without much consideration of the question and no attempt to integrate the answer and source evaluation.

Part (b)

A common criticism of centres' marking involves the awarding of AO4 at the top end of Band 3 and especially Band 4. As has consistently been pointed out in the General Report, centre reports and at CPD part (b) is not another source evaluation exercise.

Effective answers begin with candidates identifying the two given interpretations using a historian's viewpoint and then examining the sources he or she might have used to come to that interpretation. Candidates should consider how and why interpretations differ and make a judgement on the question asked. To achieve the higher bands judgements, need more depth and detail and be related to the question. On the whole there was generosity in awarding AO2 and in particular AO4.

For further guidance and support please refer to the guidance for teaching Unit 4 on the GCSE history pages of the website or contact the GCSE team.

Task marking

Comments on approaches to internal marking

The majority of Centres used the marking checklist produced by the Board. This is recommended as it is a useful tool in establishing consistency within centres and between centres. However, annotation on scripts and marking checklists were inconsistent. Even markers at the same centre followed different practices. Annotation should be directed at the moderator, indicating in the script where the assessment objectives have been met and adding a summative comment, linked to the marking scheme, either on the script or in the space provided on the checklist.

It is worth stressing the importance of keeping to the submission deadline date. Candidates' work should be enclosed in plain manila folders. Some centres sent work attached with Treasury Tags or paper clips – these samples were difficult to access and could easily get mixed up. The sample should include the H1 form signed by the teacher, the H2 forms signed by candidates and a copy of the NEA exercise. Care needs to be taken in inputting candidates' details and marks on the H1, H2 and IAMIS. This all aids the moderation process.

[Unit 4 Guidance for Teaching mark-scheme.docx \(live.com\)](#)
[non-examination-assessment-marking-checklist.docx \(live.com\)](#)

Supporting you

Useful contacts and links

Our friendly subject team is on hand to support you between 8.30am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

Tel: 029 2240 4278

Email: GCSEHistory@wjec.co.uk

Qualification webpage: [GCSE History \(wjec.co.uk\)](https://www.wjec.co.uk/gcse-history)

See other useful contacts here: [Useful Contacts | WJEC](#)

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