



Level 1/2 Certificate

Applied History

OCR Level 1/2 Certificate Applied History **J948**

OCR Report to Centres

June 2013

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This report on the examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this report.

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Overview

Introduction

This was the first year of the Applied History Level 1/2 Certificate, which is in many respects very similar to the former 'Pilot' GCSE History course which ran for six years prior to June 2012. Like the Pilot GCSE, 75% of the assessment is school-based, consisting of two coursework units and one teacher assessed unit, each worth 25%. Candidates have to complete two coursework units from a choice of five, and one teacher assessed unit from a choice of four. The qualification has the potential to provide an interesting and worthwhile History course for students of all abilities.

It is absolutely essential to read the Specification carefully. This is not a project-based set of topics on which students collect information. All of the units have their own demands and it is not possible to succeed unless these have been met. More particularly, the Teacher Assessed units should consist of a portfolio of work from the whole period taken to teach the unit. This should consist of at least six items – some centres present up to 12 – on a range of topics within the main enquiry, with different tasks tackling a range of objectives.

This course puts the initiative on the teachers to design assignments which lead their students to address the assessment objectives. It is hoped that Centres will read the Moderators' Reports they receive carefully and seek guidance from OCR before setting tasks. There is also a Teachers' Guide to the course on the OCR website.

Whatever their ability, students need the opportunity to show what they can do if they are stretched. Too many small-scale, low level tasks do not allow this. A heavily-structured approach can also lead to all candidates from the same centre producing very similar work.

Some centres took the opportunity to present work in forms other than the traditional essay. Both PowerPoint presentations and wall-displays can liberate students to work in ways in which they feel comfortable and enthusiastic. Both however, have their own demands – mainly for brief, sharply-focused texts which make points more tersely than a written script. Both need thought in order to make best use of their greater visual potential.

This was the first year of assessment for this course, so too much should not be made of administrative errors. Nevertheless, work receiving external validation does require certain procedures: entering candidates for the correct units; putting a front-sheet on the work, with the candidate's full name, candidate number and mark; annotating the work so that the Moderator can see why the teacher has arrived at the mark given; including in the package for the Moderator any sources used which the candidates will refer to in their work; and despatching coursework promptly.

B951: Medieval History

The controlled assessment task was challenging and candidates managed to research well and find suitable evidence to attempt an answer to the question. It is clear that in some centres a 'booklet' of sources was provided for candidates to use.

Both questions were accessible for the full range of candidates. Weaker answers tended to interpret the question in a more generic way, so for instance responses to the Raiders and Invaders question turned into answers based on who was the most successful invader, and responses to the Power and Control question became more about Henry's exploits in France and Edward's hammering of the Scots.

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B952: Local History Investigation

Well-constructed tasks enabled candidates to address the requirements of this unit, which are to address the significance of the site in the present as well as the past.

B953: International History

This was the most popular choice. Much descriptive and narrative work diverted some students from the requirement to address significance.

B954: Whose History? Presenting the past

Not enough entries to report on.

B955: Change over Time

This well-resourced unit worked well.

B956: A Society in Depth

The specification shows that this unit should be tackled through two tasks: a source-based enquiry, and an analysis of the role of an individual. There was some confusion in the way some centres presented work.

B957: Heritage Management OR Heritage Marketing

The only teacher assessed unit to receive more than a handful of entries was B957, Heritage Marketing. There were entries for both (a) and (b) options. There was some remarkably good work in this unit, taking advantage of the opportunity to present results in interesting formats.

B958: Multimedia in History: Bringing the Past to Life

Not enough entries to report on.

B959: Missing Pages: The Migrant Experience

Not enough entries to report on.

B960: An Archaeological Enquiry

Not enough entries to report on.

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