



## **General Certificate of Secondary Education**

### **History 3041/7/2C**

#### *Specification A*

#### **Paper 2 Option C**

## **Report on the Examination**

### *2007 examination – June series*

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## *Paper 2 Option C*

### **General Issues**

The general quality of the work produced by candidates was very good and in many ways impressed the examiners. Most candidates demonstrated a broad knowledge of the period and an understanding of the main concepts through the key issues identified in the syllabus and the people and events specified. No part of the paper was widely misinterpreted and no part of the ability range appeared to find any question either inaccessible or impossible to answer. While the main issues and trends in the Elizabethan history seemed well understood, there were one or two specific areas where candidates displayed patchy knowledge and understanding. This was most evident in relation to the Drake's circumnavigation of the globe. However it is good to see candidates in the examination integrating their knowledge of the period with the historical skills they have learned to demonstrate convincing historical reasoning. The sources seemed accessible on the whole with Source D being most demanding. The understanding and interpretation of the sources depended on ability but the overwhelming majority of candidates could work with the sources and use them to inform their answers.

The demands of the paper were broadly consistent with those of last year's paper. Section A of Paper 2 offered a manageable and largely enjoyable opportunity for all candidates to show what they understood, knew and could do. In Section B both questions 2(c) and 3(c) required careful thought and the application of knowledge and understanding. It was noticeable that the more able candidates distinguished themselves on Questions 1e and 1f of Section A.

In Section A of the paper there was evidence that centres had succeeded in encouraging candidates to use knowledge to support answers to questions focused on historical skills. Candidates in this section of the paper displayed a willingness to engage originally and purposefully with the sources, and use what knowledge and understanding they had. In Section B candidates showed a slight preference for Question 3 about Puritanism and the theatre rather than Question 2 on Drake, ships and seamen.

### **Questions: Section A**

#### **Question 1**

- (a) From the source, the majority of candidates successfully comprehended and drew simple inferences about Queen Elizabeth and England at the start of her reign. There was a widespread view amongst candidates that according to the source, England was weak and had many potential problems. Candidates who took this view were rewarded at Level 2. Able candidates pointed out that the source showed that many people in England did not look forward to Elizabeth's reign in 1558. Many candidates scored at the highest level with their answers to this question.
- (b) Candidates had great success at showing comprehension and drawing inferences about the different views of England and Elizabeth shown in Sources A and B. Candidates found both sources easy to consider in terms of their ideas and language. However, many candidates of moderate ability and below chose not to use both sources explicitly in their answer. Many candidates implicitly used both sources and described what was in both (especially Source B in this question) drawing out simple differences and, therefore, gained reward at Level 2.

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Candidates broadly understood that Source B was laudatory about Elizabeth. Candidates believed that Source B showed Elizabeth in an admirable light and deserving of respect. Able candidates often discussed the following points of comparison, the Queen's leadership qualities, the wealth or poverty of the nation, and England's neighbours and the relationship with France. Examiners noted again that many candidates still mix up how and why the sources differed in their responses to this question.

- (c) Candidates showed a sound understanding of the skill being tested here. Candidates in the main provided good Level 2 and Level 3 answers. In this question, candidates had a clear target to explain why there were differences between Sources A and B. The majority of candidates reached Level 2 and were rewarded with 3-5 marks. The majority of candidates at this level mainly focussed on the different people with very different motivations who produced the sources. There were many responses based on the simple idea that one was the Pope and the other an English Privy Councillor. The difference in times between 1558 and 1589 was frequently mentioned but often no historical significance derived from it. Equally, many candidates made no reference at all to the dates of the sources. Candidates often commented that the Pope was being honest and Waad was ignorant of how Elizabeth would operate as a monarch. These responses usually received 3 or 4 marks out of the five available at this level. Responses with some simple development would receive five marks.

The development of these differences in detail and context brought Level 3 marks to the candidate (6-7 marks). Candidates discussed the time difference, motivation and audience at this higher level. The comments of the Pope were considered to be private and not for a general audience. Most significantly, the candidate at this level; realised that the Pope spoke after the defeat of the Spanish Armada. Therefore, the Pope had some strong evidence for his remarks. Waad was speaking early in the reign and several candidates were of the opinion that he might be a returned émigré who would prefer the more Protestant leanings of Elizabeth's half brother, Edward VI.

- (d) Candidates found the source straightforward to understand in terms of its content rather than its provenance. The vast majority of candidates could comment on the images of the defeat of the Armada that they could see in the portrait; thus candidates were able to infer or explain that this represented one of Elizabeth's greatest achievements. Candidates noted that in the picture Elizabeth's hand on the globe suggested her power and dominance; other responses mentioned the wealth that her clothes and appearance suggested. The majority of candidates offered answers to this question that were rewarded in Level 2 (3-5 marks).

Examiners noted that the vast majority of candidates based their answers around the content of the source rather than the provenance of the source. It was observed that many candidates seemed to lack an understanding of how this image represented Elizabethan propaganda and that it was designed to send a message about Elizabeth's power. In the main, the better answers at Level 3 focussed on this aspect of the image. Other good answers showed an understanding of how the fact that there were other significant achievements in Elizabeth's reign such as the Poor Law or the prevention of civil war.

- (e) Source D proved a good discriminator of candidates' abilities. Candidates were generally not well equipped to argue about the relative seriousness of the level of threat posed to

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Elizabeth by different plots. Weaker candidates generally agreed with parts of the source and frequently paraphrased parts of it. There were few of the comments seen last year that the author was ill-qualified to offer an opinion because he had not been present. Some candidates at Level 2 were able to disagree with the assessment of the threat and impact of the Ridolfi plot by using their knowledge of the Babington plot and Mary, Queen of Scots' role in it. Many candidates' responses betrayed a hazy distinction between Mary Tudor and Mary, Queen of Scots. How well more able candidates scored in Level 3 depended on how well they balanced agreement and disagreement with the opinions of the author of Source D. This usually involved acknowledgement of the impact of the Ridolfi plot but contrasting it with the Throckmorton or Babington plots. In some cases when considering the 'cruellest blow' they countered the assertion in Source D with the idea that the assassination of William of Orange had more impact.

- (f) There were a few good answers to this question and the question proved to be a good discriminator. The question was straightforward in its wording. The question did require some thought but then relatively brief perceptive answers scored highly.

Some candidates who confined their answers to a few simple points or general statements about Walsingham and his spy network were limited to Level 1 marks. Many candidates were able to offer some more developed comments usually about the Walsingham and often included general comments about the loyalty of the majority of the people and Elizabeth's ability and intelligence. These answers usually received 3 to 6 marks at Level 2.

For candidates who were able to give factual support and details about several factors, 7 to 10 marks were available. Responses at this level were able to explain in detail the part that widespread public support played, as well as the mixture of toleration and vagueness that sometimes characterised Elizabeth's policy. Mention was also made of the work of the Privy Councillors, the propaganda and the nature of the religious settlement. England's defeat of the Armada was often referred to as a major turning point in ensuring that Elizabeth would not be overthrown.

## Question 2

- (a) This was a less popular option. Most candidates who answered this question did it poorly. At Level 1 mention was made of sailing and the discovery of China and America. The higher ability candidates who gained five or six marks were distinguished by the development of detail about Hawkins' career and the impact it had on other sailors and events.
- (b) This question was a straightforward question and drew some good answers. This question gave some help by the quotation that was provided. At Level 2 the vast majority of candidates followed Source E into a discussion of the benefits of exploration noting the possibility of wealth, colonies and military power. However, candidates did need to say more by way of explanation; many responses simply reiterated what was in Source E.

Candidates who discussed and explained the attraction of the voyages at different levels of society were usually successful in gaining Level 3 marks.

- (c) This question was poorly answered. Candidates did not display sufficient detail of Drake's circumnavigation. Candidates who knew some simple details about the voyage

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were rewarded at Level 1 or 2 depending on the extent to which the knowledge was developed. This frequently meant discussion of the decisions Drake took and the mutiny that Doughty threatened. At Level 3 and 4 the following points were discussed; the improvements in ships and seamanship and technological advances to do with navigation and guns. A few candidates wrote of the Renaissance mood of the times and the willingness of sailors to see through such an enterprise. Many quite rightly identified the luck that Drake had.

### Question 3

- (a) This question attracted more answers than Question 2. A few candidates did not associate Burbage with the theatre at all but assumed he was an unknown Puritan or an archbishop like Whitgift. However many candidates answered this part very well. They scored Level 1 marks for identifying points about Burbage's career. The more able candidates gained five or six marks and were distinguished by the development of detail about the points they made. This frequently saw answers that referred to his father, the Globe and his theatre company.
- (b) This question drew many good answers. Frequently, examiners found candidates detailing all the beliefs of the Puritans, sometimes contrasting this knowledge with equally detailed knowledge of Roman Catholic beliefs. This question did give some help in the quotation that was provided. Many candidates relied upon the quotation here and concentrated on the threat the Puritans posed and the possibility of a rebellion and the overthrow of Elizabeth. At Level 3 candidates showed that they realised that the Puritans were a 'challenging' group. Frequently examiners saw intelligent reference to the political and religious elements within the Puritan movement.
- (c) This question did prove attractive to many candidates. Many answers described the Puritan opposition to the theatre and did not address the rest of the question. These answers were limited to Level 1 or 2 marks. Some candidates displayed an excellent knowledge of the theatre and its layout but lacked detailed knowledge of its achievements. More able candidates reached level three by explaining that the Puritan opposition did not have a great impact on the achievements or popularity of the theatre in Elizabethan times. Good candidates were clearly able to identify why the Elizabethan theatre was so popular and successful. A few answers to this question displayed an outstanding understanding and wide knowledge of the period.

### Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.