

4 Details of the assessment

Paper 1 Document question

Written paper, 1 hour 15 minutes, 40 marks

Candidates will complete one document question on one of these options:

- European option: Modern Europe, 1750–1921
- American option: The history of the USA, 1820–1941
- International option: International history, 1870–1945

The topics within these options will rotate year-on-year. Please refer to the instructions on pages 22–23 to check

which topics are assessed in each year.

There will be two parts to each question.

Part (a) Candidates will be expected to consider two sources on one aspect of the material.

Part (b) Candidates will be expected to use all the sources and their knowledge of the period to address how far the

sources support a given statement.

Candidates must answer both parts of the question they choose.

Sources will contain a maximum of 600 words and there will be at least three sources on a specific issue.

Evidence will contain material from a range of documentary sources.

Paper 2 Outline study

Written paper, 1 hour 45 minutes, 60 marks

Candidates will select two questions from one of these options:

- European option: Modern Europe, 1750–1921
- American option: The history of the USA, 1820–1941
- International option: International history, 1870–1945

The topics within these options will rotate year-on-year. Please refer to the instructions on pages 22–23 to check

which topics are assessed in each year.

There will be two parts to each question.

Part (a) requires a causal explanation: consideration of the significance of factors and connections between causes.

Part (b) requires consideration of significance and weighing the relative importance of factors.

Candidates must answer both parts of the question they choose.

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Paper 3 Interpretations question

Written paper, 1 hour 15 minutes, 40 marks

Candidates will select one question from one of these options:

- Topic 1: The origins of the First World War
- Topic 2: The Holocaust
- Topic 3: The origins and development of the Cold War

One extract of no more than 600 words in length from an historian's writing will be set on each of the topics. The

author of the extract will not be identified, nor will candidates be asked to identify the author.

There will be a single question, asking candidates what they can learn from the extract about the interpretation and

approach of the historian who wrote it.

They will be expected to show knowledge and understanding of the events and developments included in the

topic (Assessment Objective 1), but the purpose of the study will be for them to develop the ability to analyse and

evaluate how aspects of the past have been interpreted and represented (Assessment Objective 4).

While candidates will be expected to have an awareness of different interpretations, their study of the topic should

not be simply historiographical. Rather, by considering different interpretations, candidates should develop an

understanding of the nature of the discipline of History, and the ways in which History is produced.

In particular, through studying their chosen topic, candidates will need to consider why historians produce

different interpretations of the same events, including:

- the fragmentary nature of historical evidence
- the selection and interpretation of evidence

- the ways that the passage of time can change the focus of historians' views, with the emergence of new

evidence or new interpretations of other historians

- the ways that historians are influenced by the time and place in which they work.

They will also need to develop an awareness of the different approaches historians adopt to their work, including:

- how different historians ask different questions about their field of study

- how historians' approaches are influenced by their own ideology and beliefs (e.g. by focusing on issues of class,

gender, the role of structures)

- the inter-relationship between historians' interpretations and approaches.

In the context of this question paper, the meaning of interpretation is what the historian says in the extract, the

nature of the claims made and the conclusions drawn. It is not what the extract says: it is what can be inferred from

the extract.

The approach is what the historian brings to their study of the topic, what they are interested in, the questions

they ask and the methods they use.

Interpretation and approach are closely interrelated. No distinction between interpretation and approach is

required, as the interpretation will emerge from the approach. Candidates are not required to distinguish between

the two.

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Paper 4 Depth study

Written paper, 1 hour 45 minutes, 60 marks

Candidates will select two questions on their chosen depth study:

- European option, Depth study 1: European history in the interwar years, 1919–41
- American option, Depth study 2: The USA, 1944–92

- International option, Depth study 3: International history, 1945–92

Command words

The table below includes command words used in the assessment for this syllabus. The use of the command word

will relate to the subject context.

Command word What it means

Assess make an informed judgement

Compare identify/comment on similarities and/or differences

Contrast identify/comment on differences

Discuss write about issue(s) or topic(s) in depth in a structured way

Evaluate judge or calculate the quality, importance, amount, or value of something

Explain set out purposes or reasons / make the relationships between things evident / provide why and/or how and support with relevant evidence

Phrases such as ‘How far do you agree.....?’ and ‘To what extent...?’ and ‘Account for...’ may also be seen in the

assessment for this syllabus.