

**2005 HSC Notes from
the Marking Centre
History Extension**

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2005 HSC NOTES FROM THE MARKING CENTRE HISTORY EXTENSION

Introduction

This document has been produced for the teachers and candidates of the Stage 6 course in History Extension. It provides comments with regard to responses to the 2005 Higher School Certificate examination, indicating the quality of candidate responses and highlighting the relative strengths and weaknesses of the candidature in each section and each question.

This document should be read along with the relevant syllabus, the 2005 Higher School Certificate examination, the marking guidelines and other support documents which have been developed by the Board of Studies to assist in the teaching and learning of History Extension.

General Comments

In 2005, 2359 candidates attempted the History Extension examination. Although there has been an overall increase in candidature of more than twenty-five per cent since 2002, in 2005 there was a slight drop in the number of candidates sitting for the examination.

The 2005 examination paper was accessible and successful in discriminating between candidates. The 2005 question required candidates to evaluate the perspectives offered in the Source itself, rather than using or just alluding to the Source to deal with broader issues. Candidates could not fulfil the demands of the question by adopting a ‘cut and paste’ approach. A close engagement with the Source was required, in order to evaluate the perspectives that it offered.

Responses at the top of the range continue to be notable for their sophistication, logic and clarity. Nevertheless, examiners reported that some candidates, as in 2004 and 2003, continued to rely on prepared answers and often structured their responses in terms of last year’s questions. This was clearly evident in Question 2, but was also present in some parts of answers to Question 1. Candidates should be aware that it is important to be able to use a range of historians and to be able, as the question requires, to address them in terms of the historical debates, context and methodology. Candidates are also advised to carefully consider the implications and focus of the questions and use the historians that are most appropriate in terms of the Source.

The better responses used historians, debates and argument that engaged directly with the key issues of historiography raised by the questions, using their knowledge of the historians, the Case Study and the debates to evaluate perspectives and the use of sources and evidence by historians. In better responses, candidates did more than describe, assert or affirm, they constructed arguments. In this way they displayed critical thinking within the context of historiography.

One trend that is evident was the use, by some candidates, of terminology more appropriate to literary criticism found in a syllabus other than the History Extension syllabus. Candidates and teachers are reminded of the importance of a close reading of, and use of the language of, the History Extension syllabus.

As mentioned in the Notes from the Marking Centre in previous years, candidates are reminded, that the examiners can draw from a range of areas within the syllabus. The syllabus therefore, and not past papers, should be the primary focus of candidates and their teachers when preparing for the

History Extension examination. It should not be assumed that the pattern or style of question used in 2005 will be repeated in 2006.

The examination required candidates to answer two questions in two hours. Since each of the questions is of equal value, it is important that candidates are careful in their allocation of time and avoid devoting too much time to one question to the detriment of the other.

The History Extension course is an examination of the evolution of the way history is constructed and recorded over time. Teachers and candidates must therefore be aware of the necessity of going beyond a narrative or description of the events or content in any of the areas of study. Better candidates are clearly identified by their capacity to do more than just identify interpretations of history or areas of debate – they offer evaluations and/or assessments of them. Above all they engage with the specific demands of the question.

As in the past, it was once again evident in the 2005 examination that there are real advantages to be gained from seeing the content and skills associated with both parts of the examination paper (Question 1 and Question 2) holistically. In argument and analysis, ideas and examples that might be appropriate for Question 1 can be useful when addressing parts of the debates contained in the Case Studies. Key ideas and concepts should be integrated across the whole course; appropriate content and concepts can be utilised when answering Question 1 and/or Question 2. This does not mean duplicating content. It does mean using the concepts and understanding developed in a study of historiography when dealing with Case Studies.

Teachers and candidates should also be aware that examiners may ask questions that address the syllabus outcomes in a manner that requires candidates to respond by integrating their knowledge, understanding and skills developed through studying the course. A comprehensive grasp of the Key Questions is expected of candidates in this higher level course.

Section I

Question 1

The question required candidates to identify key historiographical issues from a source adapted from *Re-thinking History* by Keith Jenkins, to evaluate the perspectives of that source. The better responses addressed the key issues raised by the source, and evaluated them in the light of at least two other sources or points of view. In doing so, they made clear links to the source, and integrated it with their own sources.

Better responses offered complex, sustained and critical analysis of the perspectives offered in the source. They did more than identify and describe perspectives offered by other sources – they evaluated those perspectives by offering an integrated and conceptualised analysis of them in the light of the source provided and historiographical discourse in general.

Candidates are again reminded of the need to carefully select their sources in response to the demands of the question. Not all sources are equally apt. The selection of sources should be linked to the evaluation required by the question and to the key issues raised by the source provided.

A range and variety of sources should be considered within a conceptual, rather than just a chronological, framework. This variety will allow candidates the best possible range of sources to draw on in the examination. Better responses were structured around the key historiographical issues identified from the source.

Weaker responses described rather than evaluated the key issues and did not deal with the most appropriate of their own sources. Many of these responses were prepared answers with discussion of sources not always linked to the focus of the question nor integrated with the key issues presented in the source provided. Many of these responses were structured and even couched in terms of past questions.

Some weaker responses also tended to rely on a single class text that summarised and interpreted the historians for them, substituting the author of the text for the historians and their approaches to history.

Section II

Question 2

In the 2005 examination, responses covered almost all of the Case Studies represented in the syllabus. The two most popular Case Studies in each area were:

Ancient:

- Thucydides
- Tacitus

Medieval and Early Modern:

- Elizabeth
- Crusades

Modern:

- JFK
- Appeasement

Australian:

- Convict Women
- Origins of the First Australians

JFK remains the most popular option. The next largest option was Elizabeth, followed by Appeasement.

With the exception of the Case Studies listed above, none of the others attracted more than 70 candidates. The average number of candidates per Case Study across the remaining Case Studies was approximately 25. The smallest Case Studies were Confucianism and Origins of Rome.

Although the question was generic in nature to cater for the 24 different Case Studies, it did require a sustained, balanced, coherent, complex and critical assessment of how historians use sources and evidence to change debates. The use of a quotation linked to the question provided a clear discriminator because it required candidates to assess the selected areas of historical debate in light of the quotation.

There were outstanding responses from all of the Case Studies. These responses used a range of historians representing the debates, different methodologies and differing points of view. The better responses also clearly integrated the historians and the areas of historical debate specified in the syllabus and required by the question. The need for clarity in, and development of, this focus and

integration cannot be over-emphasised. Candidates who developed their response around the context, methods and attitudes of a range of historians were clearly advantaged.

Some of the weaker responses that addressed the JFK Case Study appeared to rely almost exclusively on a single source that reviewed and summarised the debates, the historians and some of the key interpretations for them. These candidates often offered limited narrative, survey-style responses.

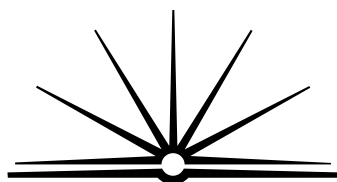
Candidates should be aware that they must choose their Case Studies from those set out in the syllabus. Beyond that they should select their historians and sources for the Case Studies with care. A range of historians and interpretations should be chosen.

In Case Studies drawn from areas previously examined in old 3 Unit Courses, some candidates were disadvantaged because they continued to rely on content, technique and a style of response more appropriate to old 3 Unit Courses. Nevertheless it is clear that there has been a notable improvement in responses from candidates engaged in these Case Studies. Some of the best responses came from these Case Studies when candidates addressed more than the content and went to the key issues of the perspective, method and context of the historians.

History Extension

2005 HSC Examination Mapping Grid

Question	Marks	Content	Syllabus outcomes
Section I			
1	25	What is History – key questions 2, 3	E1.1, E2.2, E2.3
Section II			
2	25	What is History – key questions 1–5	E1.1, E2.2, E2.3



B O A R D O F S T U D I E S
NEW SOUTH WALES

2005 HSC History Extension Marking Guidelines

Section I

Question 1

Outcomes assessed: E1.1, E2.2, E2.3

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies comprehensively key perspectives raised in the source about historiographical issues Provides a complex, sustained and critical analysis of these perspectives using comparisons and/or contrasts from at least TWO other sources Evaluates the stimulus material and other sources to derive complex judgements Provides a perceptive synthesis of the identified perspectives in a well-structured and integrated response 	21–25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies key perspectives raised in the source about historiographical issues Provides a substantial and sustained analysis of these perspectives using comparisons and/or contrasts from at least TWO other sources Evaluates the stimulus material and other sources to derive balanced judgements Provides a coherent synthesis of the identified perspectives in a well-structured and integrated response 	16–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies perspectives raised in the source about historiographical issues Provides a reasoned analysis of these perspectives using comparisons and/or contrasts from at least ONE other source Provides some evaluation of the stimulus material and limited judgement Provides a relevant discussion of the identified perspectives in a well-structured response 	11–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies features of the source Identifies a coherent interpretation from the stimulus material and/or from at least ONE other source to illustrate the historian's purpose Presents a description of some aspects of the identified features in a structured response May contain superficial and/or erroneous judgements 	6–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May identify features from the source or any other source Displays little or no judgement of the stimulus material or any other source Isolated observations on the work of the historian 	1–5

Section II

Question 2

Outcomes assessed: E1.1, E2.2, E2.3

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Clearly identifies how historians use sources and evidence to change debates in historyPresents a balanced treatment of the historians and the areas of debate selected for discussionPresents a sustained, complex and coherent assessment of how historians use sources and evidence to change debates in history using the case studyMakes pertinent use of the quotation	21–25
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Clearly identifies how historians use sources and/or evidence to change debates in historyPresents a balanced treatment of the historians and the areas of debate selected for discussionPresents a coherent and relevant assessment of how historians use sources and/or evidence to change debates in history using the case studyMakes relevant use of the quotation	16–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identifies how viewpoints, sources and/or evidence inform an understanding of debates in historyPresents some assessment of viewpoints and sources and the way in which they change debates in history using the case studyMakes use of the quotation	11–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Some disjointed views of how historians use sourcesSome description of the case studyMay make limited use of quotation	6–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Disjointed and limited views of how historians use sourcesIsolated observations on the case studyMay mention quotation	1–5