



## Examiners' Report

### Principal Examiner Feedback

History

Pearson Edexcel Advanced

Paper 3: Themes in breadth with aspects in depth

Option 36.1: Protest, agitation and parliamentary reform in Britain, c1780-1928

Option 36.2: Ireland and the Union, c1774-1923

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## Introduction

It is recommended that centres should refer to previous Principal Examiner reports to achieve a more rounded view of what is typical performance in this paper. This examination series has taken place under exceptional circumstances and the comments in this report are based on a significantly smaller entry than is usual.

A Level paper 9HI036 deals with Protest, agitation and parliamentary reform in Britain, c1780-1928 (36.1) and Ireland and the Union, c1774-1923 (36.2).

The paper is divided into three sections. Section A contains a compulsory question which is based on two enquiries linked to one source. It assesses source analysis and evaluation skills (AO2). Section B comprises a choice of essays that assess understanding of the period in depth (AO1) by targeting five second order concepts - cause, consequence, change and continuity, similarity and difference, and significance. Section C comprises a choice of essays that relate to aspects of the process of change over a period of at least 100 years (AO1). Most candidates appeared to organise their time effectively and there was little evidence of candidates being unable to attempt all three sections of the paper within the time allocated.

The candidates' performance on individual questions is considered in the next section.

### Question 1

The best responses to this question were able to interrogate the source and responded directly to the focus of the two enquiries. Such answers were well supported with contextual knowledge and evaluated the source, considering what weight might be attached to it. It was disappointing to note that there were a number of weaker candidates who only addressed the source and the two related enquiries in a most limited way. Rather, such responses tended to use this question as an opportunity to describe a range of aspects of women's lives, often starting with the Contagious Diseases Act and ending with the Cat and Mouse Act.

### Question 2

Where candidates interrogated the source and responded directly to the focus of the two enquiries, it was basis for achievement in the higher levels. However, there was some tendency to use contextual knowledge, some of which was not always linked to the enquiries, to drive the answer. Some responses tended to extract information, rather than develop inferences. Most candidates did engage in some evaluation, but at times this amounted to little more than summarising the caption. Candidates tended not to comment on the fact that this speech was reported verbatim in a newspaper.

### Question 3

This was marginally the more popular of the two options in this section of the paper. Some impressive answers were seen where candidates had fully engaged

with the focus of the question and had strong contextual knowledge to support the analysis that was presented. Weaker answers struggled with the chronological demands of the question. They often included material that came earlier, which could have been made relevant, and referenced Chartism, which was clearly beyond the scope of this question.

#### Question 4

This was marginally the less popular of the two options in this section of the paper. Candidates were able to tackle this question reasonably well, largely addressing the focus of the question, although many engaged in rather generalised support from contextual knowledge, rather than precise support. Some candidates struggled with the chronological parameters of the question, wishing to include the General Strike in their response.

#### Question 5

This was the more popular of the two options in this section of the paper. Some strong responses were seen to this question, where secure contextual knowledge was clearly applied to the focus of the question. However, not all candidates were secure in their application of chronologically relevant contextual knowledge.

#### Question 6

This was not a popular choice of question. The focus should have been on the development of trade unionism rather than a generic description of living and working conditions in the period.

#### Question 7

This was the more popular of the two options in this section of the paper. Candidates largely understood the approach that needed to be taken in the question, with stronger candidates displaying a secure grasp on the importance of the Ballot Act and testing its importance against other valid alternatives across the entire chronology. Weaker answers were either descriptive, rather than analytical, in their approach and/or neglected any real exploration of the Ballot Act. There were some responses which rooted the answer almost exclusively in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, thus lacking the requisite chronological range.

#### Question 8

This was the less popular of the two options in this section of the paper. Responses were mixed. Where candidates understood the focus of the question and supported their analysis with relevant detail, the results were impressive. However, some candidates did not engage with the social composition of the House of Commons and thus were not able to meet the demands of the question.

#### Question 9

All candidates for this part of the paper answered this question. Answers did demonstrate some chronological range, but there was often a lack of specific contextual knowledge. Often the same quite generic points were made about more than one rising in the responses. Answers tended to describe what happened rather than fully engage with the significance of individual risings.

### **Paper Summary**

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

#### Section A

- Candidates should aim to draw out reasoned and developed inferences that go beyond comprehension of the sources.
- Contextual knowledge should be used to illuminate and discuss what is in the source, rather than provide an answer to the enquiry. Material that is clearly beyond the scope of the enquiries is unlikely to be credited.
- Evaluation of the source should be linked to the enquiries and should amount to more than merely repeating what is in the caption.

#### Sections B and C

- Candidates should identify the correct conceptual focus of the question.
- Candidates should avoid a narrative/descriptive approach; this undermines the analysis that is required for the higher levels.
- Candidates must be aware of key dates, as identified in the specification, so that they can address questions with chronological precision.