



External Assessment Report 2012

Subject(s)	History
Level(s)	History Standard Grade: F, G and C 2013

The statistics used in this report are pre-appeal.

This report provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers/lecturers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding. It would be helpful to read this report in conjunction with the published question papers and marking instructions for the examination.

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

In 2013, as in previous years, the vast majority of candidates opted for Unit Contexts IB, IIA and IIID. A sizeable minority selected options IC and IIIC, with a smaller number of candidates choosing options IA, IIB and IIIA. Numbers attempting IIIB were minimal.

Marker feedback deemed all 3 papers (C/G/F) to be challenging but fair, with comprehensive sampling of the syllabus. The papers were considered to be accessible, across all contexts, to the wide disparity of ability presented at each level.

Similarly, **Gaelic-medium scripts** did not seem to present candidates with any inherent difficulties. Indeed, Foundation candidates impressed with their responses: all but one were written completely in Gaelic and were able to convey the meaning of even quite complex concepts. However, with the exception of one centre where all 3 candidates wrote in excellent Gaelic and were able to make their meaning clear, the great majority completed the General paper in English. As such, careful consideration must be given to encouraging candidates to use their fluent Gaelic skills in writing History answers. It should be noted that the number of Gaelic-medium entries this year were 30 at Credit, 34 at General and 5 at Foundation.

As in previous years, overall performance varied according to ability, especially at the interfaces i.e. good General candidates found the Foundation exam fairly straight-forward whilst genuine Foundation candidates were challenged – a pattern repeated at General and Credit. Overall ES continues to improve and is almost universally the stronger element at C/G. Clearly centres are training candidates well in such skills but the widening discrepancy between ES and KU, especially at “C”, remains concerning in view of progression to Higher.

Overall there were fewer multiple contexts attempted with significantly fewer attempting questions out of sequence: where the latter occurred, often on a centre basis at G/C, this was generally to the candidate’s detriment; particularly in Unit I where there is a degree of overlap across Contexts A/B/C, as marks for both Sections A and B must be taken from the same context. As a consequence, a fair number of candidates had their KU marks discounted since ES carries heavier weighting overall. Clearly this had an effect on KU marks and grades.

Disappointingly, at Foundation a fair number of candidates also persisted in completing wrong or multiple contexts, despite ticking the appropriate boxes on page 3 in line with SQA instructions that invigilators and centre PTs/Faculty Heads should liaise and direct candidates to appropriate contexts. (See Advice to Centres).

In addition, markers continue to report increased instances, across C/G/F, of poor and indeed almost illegible handwriting - made worse by use of pencil rather than pen. Unfortunately, on occasion some transcribed scripts proved even more difficult to decipher

than the candidate's original. Many typed scripts also proved problematic to read and mark where no or single spacing was used: centres should consider using double or treble spacing instead. (See advice to Centres)

Foundation

Overall performance was deemed to be very positive: candidates continued to be better prepared for the units studied and demonstrated greater understanding of technique (following instructions, using source evidence and applying process). Once again, there were far fewer minimalist or one-word answers with fewer candidates missing out questions or failing to complete the paper. However, few candidates achieved full marks especially at E.S.

As such, the 2013 Foundation paper, whilst still presenting a worthy challenge, was considered to be well-laid out, accessible and well tackled by candidates, the majority of whom opted for Unit Contexts IB and IIID.

General

Most markers felt that the majority of candidates responded very well to the demands of the General paper: whilst there were very few really poor scripts, also few candidates were achieving full marks but most candidates seemed to give their best efforts, displaying good process throughout, responding appropriately to the different question types.

Clearly, as highlighted last year, most centres are training candidates well in terms of technique and the need to make process clear in their answers. However, many markers felt that this was at the expense of mastering recall which, disappointingly, was not as strong yet again this year, even from "C/G" candidates: a significant number omitted the required recall from their answers which were heavily reliant on presented evidence, both at KU and ES (where required, e.g. ES4/6). This disparity or imbalance between KU and ES was considered to indicate a lack of study/revision by candidates who had otherwise been well trained to handle ES with confidence or, indeed, of learning organised under "preferred headings" (see KU1 question in IIA requiring a description of trench conditions on the Western Front which was done exceptionally well by most candidates, even the weakest scoring best here). As such, ES has become almost universally the better element, outstripping KU in terms of exam performance.

Overall then, the 2013 General paper was considered to be very fair and accessible, with good rigour in challenging candidates in terms of recall and process but providing opportunities for candidates to perform well, both in terms of knowledge and skills, *if prepared*.

Credit.

As usual with C/G candidates, performance was variable but overall markers considered 2013 scripts to be of a reasonably high standard, although with fewer outstandingly good scripts. The majority of candidates completed the paper in the time allocated and the wrong contexts were rarely attempted. However, whilst fewer very weak scripts were noted, concern still remains about inappropriate presentations.

Continuing the trend of recent years, the vast majority of markers commented that overall ES continues to improve and, once again, is almost universally the stronger element at “C/G”. In many cases there is a complete imbalance between the 2 elements with ES marks significantly better than those at KU, where relatively few candidates are achieving very high scores by comparison. This ever widening discrepancy between ES and KU, particularly at Credit, is especially concerning for progression to “Higher”. As noted over the last three years, candidate bias towards ES skills appears to have lessened any encouragement to learning accurate and specific factual information to support potential argument. Markers continue to highlight lack of relevant recall due to either lack of revision or misreading of questions rather than any ambiguity inherent in questions (see short essay question in IIA). Answers appear more conditional on what is taught and how it is learned, focusing on preferences (see Suffragettes, IB/C) and ignoring perceived “peripheral” syllabus(see Bonnymuir, IA; Weimar Constitution, IIID).

Overall then, the 2013 Credit paper was considered to be demanding but fair and accessible to candidates, the areas covered representing a good cross-section of the course and providing enough opportunities for candidates to demonstrate knowledge and skills.

Areas in which candidates performed well

Foundation.

Markers commented positively about overall performance, noting that most candidates responded well to the content of the paper. Indeed, KU presented no issues, most candidates performing well or very well and with fewer minimalist or one-word answers. Candidates continue to be better prepared in terms of following instructions, using sources and applying process.

More specifically:

■ In Units IA/B/C

- Question 2, **KU2** (emigration) was especially well done, with lots of recall given here.
- Question 5, **ES5** (selecting and recording evidence) was generally answered well. Most candidates knew how to select relevant presented evidence to support the appropriate tabular heading – markers considered that question layout helped here.

■ In Unit III

● **Contexts IIIA AND IIID** were particularly well done.

● **ES2:** Most candidates knew how to select relevant presented evidence, whether written or pictorial, to support a valid example of agreement or of disagreement. Once again there were far fewer cases of mis-matching than previously.

General

As noted earlier, candidates generally presented more strongly in ES than KU with the correct process being carried out in ES questions by far the majority of candidates. Some excellent training is apparent, with ES answers continuing to improve as candidates appear to have a better understanding of how to answer each question type. There was also evidence of good process in KU 2 and 3 question items.

More specifically:

■ In Units **IB/C, KU2** questions (impact of development of railways/car transport) were well done, with much good recall added here.

■ In Units **I and II, ES1** questions were well done.

Continuing the trend noted last year, most candidates knew how to evaluate the source's usefulness, with significantly fewer "rehearsing a mantra" and even weaker candidates attempting to address not just process and content but also purpose and contemporaneity- demonstrating an improved range of answers especially in terms of limitation.

■ In Units **IA/B/C,**

● Question 5, **ES5: *Most*** candidates knew how to select relevant presented evidence to support the appropriate viewpoints in the questions. Once again this elicited best responses overall, most candidates achieving high marks, especially if tables and bullet points were used.

However, full marks were not achieved mainly when candidates provided only minimalist quotes which did not "stand alone" and a minority still misunderstand the process and effectively pre-empt their conclusion by explaining or expanding quotes and by wrongly including recall in their response. (See areas of note regarding weaker candidate performance at ES)

N.B. Collectively "Investigation" (ES1/5/6) questions were completed effectively across all 3 contexts, with most candidates picking up a lot of marks here – again demonstrating good practice by centres and candidates. Excellent training has resulted in by far the majority of candidates carrying out the correct process.

■ In Unit **IIA, KU1** (describe trench conditions on Western Front) was exceptionally well done, with much good recall, especially with reference to trench foot and rats, added here.

■ In Units **II and III, ES2** (Agree/ Disagree) continued to show improvement with markers noting once again far more evidence of developed comparisons and well-taught technique.

● In Unit **III, ES4**: most candidates knew how to select relevant presented evidence to support their answer.

■ In Units **IIIC/D, KU2** was well attempted by candidates, with good recall added here.

■ In Units **IIIA/B/C/D, ES3** (Attitude), showed improvement with some markers highlighting better training in technique. Most candidates knew how to achieve a holistic mark, with many gaining another by using evidence in support of this.

Credit

As ever, responses were of a variable quality but overall most candidates performed reasonably well, with some very high quality answers and, in some cases, many extra booklets enclosed for marking. Again, the issue appears to be with KU: whilst generally good at addressing process in KU questions, a lot of well-trained and able candidates are scoring considerably less at KU than at ES. As such candidates need to answer questions as set and not as pre-prepared.

Overall, candidates addressed process well in KU1, 2 and 3 questions, and very well in ES2, 4 and 5 questions

More specifically:

■ In Units **IB/C, KU 1** (militant Suffragettes) was generally done well.

■ In Units **IA/B/C, ES5** was very well attempted especially in **IB**.

Most candidates knew how to select relevant presented evidence to support the appropriate viewpoints in the questions. However, some candidates struggled to link very minimalist quotes to the issue/headings as these failed to “stand alone” as answers.

Once again this elicited best responses overall at ES, most candidates achieving high marks, especially if tables and bullet points were used.

However, full marks were not achieved mainly when candidates provided only minimalist quotes which did not “stand alone” and a minority still misunderstand the

process and effectively pre-empt their conclusion by explaining or expanding quotes and by wrongly including recall in their response.

N.B. Collectively “Investigation” (ES1/5/6) questions were completed effectively across all 3 contexts, with most candidates picking up a lot of marks here – again demonstrating good practice by centres and candidates. Excellent training has resulted in by far the majority of candidates carrying out the correct process.

■ In Units **IIA/B, KU3** (Short Essay), showed continued improvement in terms of process and structure: most candidates knew how to write a short essay of several paragraphs, including an introduction and conclusion, with some markers highlighting better training in technique and resulting in scores of 6/7/8.

However, there were issues which will be highlighted later.

■ In Unit **IIIA, KU1** (Westward Expansion) was well attempted.

■ In Unit **IIID, KU2** (Hyperinflation) was also well attempted.

■ In Units **IIIC/D, ES2** (Agree) overall elicited an overall high standard of response. Once again markers noted far more evidence of developed comparisons and well -taught technique.

■ In Units **IIIA/B/C/D, ES3**: Most candidates knew how to achieve a holistic mark, with many gaining another by using evidence in support of this. However, few achieved full marks in this question.

■ In Units **IIIC/D, ES4** (How fully) also elicited an overall high standard of response. Once again markers noted far more evidence of well -taught technique: most candidates knew how to select relevant presented evidence to support their answer. However, some candidates struggled to include accurate and relevant recall.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Foundation

Areas of note regarding weaker candidate performance at KU were as follows:

Overall candidate performance at KU was good, with candidates demonstrating good centre training in the appropriate selection of relevant presented evidence. However, where issues arose these were related mainly to English language skills/comprehension (IIID: meaning of “The Putsch collapsed”) and a lack of general knowledge (IIID: practice of queuing at windows for pay).

Areas of note regarding weaker candidate performance at ES were as follows:

- **Units IA/B/C**, and indeed across **Units IIIA/B/C/D–ES1** questions, disappointingly given improvements in recent years, were poorly attempted by a number of candidates but markers believe that the multi-choice format does help most.
- **Units IA/B/C- ES5 table**, also disappointingly given improvements in recent years, wasn't done well by a significant number: selection of presented evidence was often very minimalist, thus failing to meet the criterion of “stand alone “quotes.
- **Units 1A/B/C - ES6** continues to challenge and was poorly done: many remain confused by what actually is required for a conclusion, often just making a holistic point only worth 1/2 marks or moralising with personal opinion worthy of no marks at all. Indeed ES6 was either not attempted or rarely achieved 2/2: most candidates who did get marks for this question gave the holistic answer; very few made reference to either presented evidence from the table in the previous question or recall in order to support conclusions.
- **Unit IIIA/B/C/D: ES2** (agrees/disagrees) continues to challenge a number of candidates in terms of achieving full marks (3/3) despite prompts, particularly in the implicitly more difficult “disagree” option.

Marker feedback, so far, would indicate that the poorest performance was noted in **IIIC** where the candidates found it particularly hard to identify two separate points of agreement about queuing in wartime Russia.

General

Areas of note regarding weaker candidate performance at KU were as follows:

- **Unit IA/B/C- KU1, political reforms** were poorly attempted: many candidates struggled to provide recall here as well as with the selection of relevant, accurate presented evidence. This was particularly the case in **IA** given that there were fewer reforms to choose from within the timescale examined. Generally, however, candidates across all contexts were ill-informed in this area of the syllabus and as such scores were low.
- **Unit 111A- KU3, Lincoln and the Union** proved particularly difficult for candidates with very few achieving full marks, many having conflated two or more points of presented evidence.
- Once again there is a discrepancy between KU and ES performance: a significant number of candidates are not giving any recall in KU questions, with a number of schools which struggled with KU on track to achieve firm passes at ES. Again, concerns remain regarding lack of recall, not just in individual scripts but in whole batches of scripts, indicating lack of revision or of learning organised under preferred headings Over the years it seems that candidates are learning fewer and fewer facts –a distinct disadvantage where argument, historical or otherwise, requires supporting evidence.

N.B. markers commented that question wording seemed fair and straight-forward, with good rigour. Lack of relevant recall appeared due to either lack of revision or misreading of questions rather than of any ambiguity inherent in questions. Once again, KU answers appear more conditional on what is taught and how it is learned, focusing on preferences and ignoring perceived peripheral syllabus.

Areas of note regarding weaker candidate performance at ES were as follows:

- Once again, candidates generally presented more strongly in ES than KU with the correct process being carried out in ES questions by far the majority of candidates. As noted earlier, some excellent training is apparent, with ES answers continuing to improve as candidates appear to have a better understanding of how to answer each question type.
- However, whilst ES skills are well developed, a number of candidates- including clearly Credit/General than General/Foundation- exhibited little recall/ understanding of context where this is required, mirroring concerns expressed at KU e.g.

Unit IA/B/C, ES6 (conclusion) where lack of recall automatically results in failure, potentially 5 marks reducing to 2 maximum. Many candidates provided no recall and some omitted to answer the question altogether.

- **Unit IA/B/C, ES5 (Selecting and Recording):** unusually, a surprising number of candidates responded poorly to this question. This was due to overly minimalist or simplistic answers which provided insufficient or sketchy quotes with key words missing – thus unable to “stand alone” and meet minimum requirements.

However, in **Unit IB**, the inclusion of the word “privies” caused difficulty for a number of candidates some of whom confused it with “navvies”.

- **ES3 (Attitude):** often presents problems for candidates who have difficulty expressing themselves in their own words but this was quite well done overall despite the fact that few obtain full marks here.
- **Unit IIA, ES4 (How fully..?):** a significant number of candidates experienced difficulty with this question compared with **Unit IIB** either because they had limited recall of the League of Nation’s successes – perhaps more implicitly demanding than failures- or because they misread the question. Many disregarded the question wording and merely rehearsed what they knew rather than what was required e.g. League aims or failures and even the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. However, in **Unit IIB** the drilling of candidates by centres in an **expected** sequence of questions proved problematic for some candidates who mistakenly read the ES4 as an ES2, resulting in the loss of a process mark.

Credit

Areas of note regarding weaker candidate performance at KU were as follows:

- **Unit IA - KU1, Bonnymuir** was poorly attempted with many candidates lacking factual recall and, indeed, confusing the content with Peterloo. Where recall was provided this was of a general than specific nature. Many also confused process here, answering as a **KU2** (explain) rather than a **KU1** (describe). Markers considered this to be the result of a lack of candidate knowledge rather than the nature of the question.

- **Units IA /B/C** - there were 2 issues here:

(a) question type **KU2 (explain)**, and similarly across Units **IIIA/B/C/D**, a significant number of candidates found it difficult to link each piece of supporting evidence, albeit valid and relevant, to process and lost marks accordingly.

(b) Focus on **Irish immigration, IB** proved more restricting than **Scottish emigration, IA** and **immigration generally, IC** – the MI for each of the latter being less specific.

- **Unit IIA – KU3, Short Essay** was better attempted in terms of delivering recall/ structure/ process and yet often misinterpreted by candidates: centre expectation and training in terms of using both question stems to ensure balance being inappropriate to the instructions here. For example: many disregarded “**EITHER** Britain **OR** Germany” and wrote about both countries; others failed to expand their answers beyond “food shortages”. However, where attempted as required, answers were very good with a significant number achieving 6/7/8 as noted earlier.

- **Unit 111D- KU1, Weimar Constitution:** candidate responses veered between very good and very poor. Apparently knowledge of the rights democratic Weimar established, and Nazi rule later dismantled, was in many cases neither a centre nor a candidate priority in terms of teaching and learning, despite being a key part of the syllabus.

N.B. Again, and as mirrored at General, there is a continuing disparity between KU and ES: lack of relevant recall due to either lack of revision or misreading of questions rather than of any ambiguity inherent in questions. Once again, KU answers appear more conditional on what is taught and how it is learned, focusing on preferences /headings and ignoring perceived peripheral syllabus.

Areas of note regarding weaker candidate performance at ES were as follows:

Again, as at General, candidate performance was much better in ES than KU with the correct process being carried out in ES questions by far the majority of candidates. Indeed with some excellent training, ES answers continue to improve-especially with potentially formulaic question types- as candidates appear to have a better understanding of how to answer each question type. Moreover, very few candidates/centres now attempt ES questions out of sequence and more candidates are completing the entire paper. Some

markers expressed concern, however, that some candidates continue to be presented at the wrong levels.

More specifically, however, concerns remain re.

- **Unit I A/B/C, ES1** (How useful?): here reference to secondary sources/historians and authorship still presents difficulties for many candidates who struggled here – yet well trained candidates performed well.

- **Unit II A, ES1** (How useful?): many candidates misread the question, confusing “aims” with “terms”.

- **Unit II A, ES2** (Comparing): markers found this particular question, extremely challenging to mark given the number of “mix and match” answers attempted by candidates compared with **Unit IIB**. It would appear that a significant number of candidates struggled both with interpreting the sources and process in terms of developed comparisons of **disagreement**. Overall this question was poorly attempted.

- **Unit IIID, ES3** (Attitude): this question posed a greater potential challenge to candidates compared to other **Unit III** contexts in that it contained **mixed** attitudes. Markers were advised to treat answers sympathetically but on the whole candidates handled this well in any case.

N.B. Overall, Unit II was perceived as more difficult than Units I and III.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates.

Uniquely, given that this is the final Standard Grade History diet, it seems inappropriate to give detailed and specific advice on content and question types which may or will differ at National 5.

However, there remain a number of overlapping issues and skills which should continue to be addressed by centres in preparing candidates for external, national assessment and as such these are outlined below.

General points of advice

- It is permissible, and indeed essential given marker feedback and PA Referrals this year, for Centres to liaise with Invigilators to directly instruct candidates on which contexts to answer, to ensure that wrong or multiple contexts are not attempted.
- Centres should advise candidates against writing in pencil or red pen: only black or blue pen should be used. This should ensure greater legibility.
- When candidate scripts are being typed or transcribed on laptops, please use double spacing to allow markers enough room to employ correction codes and annotate marks.
- Candidates should be encouraged and trained to read all questions and instructions carefully to avoid misinterpretation and irrelevancy: candidates should do what the question **asks** not what they **prefer**.
- Candidates should be trained to make full use of pictorial sources both at KU and ES.
- Candidates should be trained to recognise the worth of secondary sources and historians when evaluating sources.
- Candidates should be discouraged from attempting KU and ES elements/questions/sections out of sequence as this can be to their disadvantage.
- All candidates should be trained in the paper format to best prepare them for the different requirements of the exam.
- Centres should note that all areas of the syllabus can and will be sampled.

ONLY FOR 2013 STANDARD GRADE APPEALS

- Care should also be taken to ensure that candidates are presented at the correct levels, with sufficient valid and reliable evidence to support potential, especially absentee, appeals. In this respect Centres should review all commercial and in-house prelim papers to ensure that these meet the criteria outlined in SQA Guidance.

Please note that additional advice on syllabus content/question types and technique/marking procedures and instructions can be found on the SQA Website along with animated power-point and scanned script presentations showing how marks were awarded on exemplar F/G/C scripts for all contexts examined this year.

Statistical information: update on Courses

STANDARD GRADE

Number of resulted entries in 2012	19481
---	-------

Number of resulted entries in 2013	18948
---	-------

Statistical Information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of overall awards

Grade 1	27.8%
Grade 2	25.9%
Grade 3	17.9%
Grade 4	11.9%
Grade 5	12.2%
Grade 6	2.7%
Grade 7	1.6%
No award	0.0%

Grade boundaries for each assessable element in the subject included in the report

Assessable Element	Credit Max Mark	Grade Boundaries		General Max Mark	Grade Boundaries		Foundation Max Mark	Grade Boundaries	
		1	2		3	4		5	6
KU	24	16	11	20	13	10	14	10	7
ES	36	25	18	30	18	14	21	14	10