

## Principal Assessor Report 2003

**Assessment Panel:**

**History**

**Qualification area**

**Subject(s) and Level(s)  
Included in this report**

**History, S. Grade: F, G and C.**

### **Statistical information: update**

<b>Number of entries in 2002 (final)</b>	21423
<b>Pre appeal</b>	21320

<b>Number of entries in 2003</b>	
<b>Pre appeal</b>	21843

### **General comments re entry numbers**

Numbers sitting S Grade History have continued to increase since 2001 and this is a satisfactory development which demonstrates an increasing interest in the subject.

## Grade boundaries at C, B and A for each subject area included in the report

<b>Knowledge and Understanding</b>				
Credit	1:	19	2:	13
General	3:	15	4:	12
Foundation	5:	10	6:	7
<b>Enquiry Skills</b>				
Credit	1:	29	2:	21
General	3:	21	4:	17
Foundation	5:	16	6:	11

## Comments on grade boundaries for each subject area

At both KU and ES, apart from two areas (KU Grades 1 and 4), pass marks are near 'pass marks' of 55% and 75%. In all but three areas in KU, the grade boundaries match the teacher estimates. The exceptions are Credit KU where Grade 2 'cut off' is 13, not 12 and at Foundation level where 'cut offs' are 1 mark below teacher estimates.

In ES all grade boundaries match teacher estimates except at General Level where the Grade 3 'cut off' is 1 mark below estimate and Grade 4 cut off is 1 mark above.

## Comments on candidate performance

### General comments

**Foundation:** Most candidates found the paper accessible and responded favourably. Fewer than usual attempted more than the correct two Unit Contexts but a significant number of candidates still do not seem to be aware of which two Unit Contexts they should be attempting — or where to find them in the question paper. A number of candidates ticked two Unit Contexts in the boxes provided on page 3 and proceeded to tackle two different topics. The vast majority of candidates are now avoiding straight copying. While most candidates treat the paper very seriously and handle evidence well, a minority write very brief answers — sometimes even in pencil.

**General:** Most markers commented that performances overall were better than in previous years. There was less straight copying.

**Credit:** Very few candidates did not complete the paper. There was evidence of some very highly trained historians. Many candidates found the KU section quite demanding. There was evidence of many candidates being very well trained in Enquiry Skills.

### Areas of external assessment in which candidates performed well

**Foundation:** All items in Unit I (especially in Context B) were usually well done. Items 1, 2, 5 and 7 in Unit II Context B produced many excellent responses. In Unit IIC, items 1 and 6 were well done. There was evidence of improvement in tackling ES source comparison items and additional evidence of much good teaching in the ‘investigations’ in Unit I.

**General:** In Unit IA and 1B, item 1 was well tackled as was the ‘investigation’ across all Contexts in Unit I, especially item 4. In Units IIB and IIC, item 2, most candidates wrote enough for more than 3 marks. In Unit IIIA, IIIC and IIID, item 1 was well tackled. ES5 items (selecting and organising evidence) were well done and there was evidence of improved performances in ES2 (source comparison) and ES4 (contextual) items.

**Credit:** Unit IA, item 1; and Units IB and IC, items 1 and 2 were well done. In Unit IIB and IIC, item 1 produced very satisfactory results. There was evidence of Enquiry Skills types ES1, ES2 and ES5 being very well done by many candidates. ES4 items were better tackled than in previous years.

### Areas of external assessment in which candidates had difficulty

**Foundation:** Some candidates found item 3 in Units IA, IB and IC quite challenging. In IC, item 3, some candidates confused World War One and World War Two.

Many candidates are still offering nothing but source content in response to an ES1 (source evaluation) item. Many candidates struggle to respond appropriately to an ES3 (attitude) item. Some candidates are still using the wrong sources in response to item 5 in Unit I. Only where candidates clearly realise their mistake and indicate this, is credit given. Where candidates tackled Unit IIA (apparently by mistake) they found Source F hard to comprehend.

**General:** A significant number of candidates attempting KU at General Level produced no recalled evidence. Unit 1, item 2 caused problems across all contexts — especially for candidates who did not recognise the word ‘rural’. In Units IIB and IIC, item 1 was not well done.

Too many candidates still respond to an ES1 item (evaluation of a source) by using content only. The ‘attitude’ item (ES3) still causes problems — especially for candidates with poor language skills. A large number of weaker candidates could not provide recall in ES6 (investigation conclusion) items.

**Credit** candidates found difficulty with Unit IA, item 2; with Unit III A, items 1 and 2; with Unit IIIC, item 2

and Unit IID, items 1 and 2. While most candidates performed well in the 8 mark extended essay, a significant number did not provide an introduction and/or a conclusion and did not write in paragraphs. Centres are reminded that this will henceforth incur increased penalties.

In the Enquiry Skills section, source comparisons caused some problems in Unit II as did ES3 (attitude) items — especially for students with poor language skills. A significant number of students could not provide recall in ES6 (investigation conclusion) items.

## Recommendations

### Feedback to centres

**Foundation.** Candidates must be made fully aware of what two Unit Contexts they should tackle. Invigilators could be asked to indicate to candidates that they should follow the instructions on page 3 closely — and adhere to them.

ES1 still poses problems for many candidates — despite the additional rubric. All candidates should be made aware that straight copying is not permitted and that they should always use the presented evidence appropriately.

**General:** Centres are reminded that all aspects of the specified curriculum must be taught. In all KU responses, straight copying of evidence is not permitted. In addition, to obtain full marks in a KU response, recalled evidence must be used. Listing/ bullet pointed responses are marked out of a maximum of half marks.

The need to present a varied evaluation of the usefulness of a source should be stressed — content alone is not sufficient. Authorship, contemporaneity, purpose and limitation etc should also be used. Candidates who have learned a formula for responding to an ES1 item often find it hard to adapt this to suit the precise source being presented — especially if it is a non-written source.

Source comparisons should be made point by point — and preferably developed in line with the Marking Instructions. ES3 items are often not well done with too many candidates simply quoting from the passage without showing any real understanding. A holistic introductory comment is to be encouraged and often establishes that the candidate does correctly comprehend the attitude/s being conveyed. Recalled evidence in response to an ES6 (investigation conclusion) item should be clear recall.

**Credit:** Listing/ bullet pointed responses are marked out of a maximum of half marks. In the 8 mark, extended response a candidate should provide an introduction and a conclusion and must write in clearly defined paragraphs. From 2004 marks will be deducted for failure to provide these requirements. One mark for each piece of relevant, supporting evidence will be awarded.

While students normally provide a well-argued, balanced source evaluation (ES1) in Unit I, they often refer to content only in later Units — especially when presented with a non-written source. Some students still struggle to evaluate a secondary source, often claiming it is not useful. Too many candidates have learned an ES1 formula which is rehearsed in the exam and not adapted to evaluate the actual, presented evidence. Weaker candidates find it particularly challenging to adapt their evaluation training to assess the value of a pictorial source or a statistical chart.

The only place where a chart or table is permissible in a candidate answer is in an ES5 (selection and organisation of evidence) response. Under no circumstances can a chart or table be used elsewhere — particularly in response to a source comparison item. Wrongly constructed responses can only be marked out of a maximum of half marks.

ES3 items still prove challenging for many students. It is not enough to simply quote from the source. The candidate must show understanding of the attitudes conveyed in the source and using one's own words is a good start.

In an ES6 response the required recall must be provided in a clear manner.