



WINCHESTER
COLLEGE

Winchester College History Entrance Examination Specification

The History Entrance paper will be made up of two sections. Section A will be source-based and no knowledge of the content of the sources will be expected. Section B will require candidates to write an essay using their own knowledge and the questions will be sufficiently open-ended to ensure that a wide range of material could be deployed. The paper will be 75 minutes in duration.

Section A: Sources

This section will be made up of around half a dozen primary sources on a particular topic and it is assumed that the candidate will not have studied the material in advance. A combination of shorter and longer questions will be asked about the sources. Candidates might be expected to:

- Explain the meaning of a source in their own words
- Identify evidence or arguments contained within a source
- Compare the content of two sources, or explain the extent to which one source supports another
- Consider a source's utility or value as evidence, with possible reference to its provenance (which will be provided in italics)
- Explain the meaning or message of a cartoon or other image
- Consider the extent to which a set of sources supports a given viewpoint.

We are chiefly concerned with the ability to make astute observations about the *content* of the sources through comprehension, observation, comparison, and clear explanation. Comment about the *provenance* of a source might be expected by candidates where it helps to reveal something about the value of the source as evidence. However, candidates are not encouraged to make generic or stock observation about provenance when it is not linked to the content of the source or helps better to explain its meaning. Of course, in some cases questions may explicitly ask candidates to consider provenance as part of their answer.

Section B: Essays

The essay questions are purposefully broad in scope. It is hoped that candidates will feel they have a range of options available to them and be able to deploy whatever they have studied in a number of contexts. They will be asked to write a single essay from a choice of half a dozen or so questions. The precise pattern of essays will change from year to year, but candidates should expect to be able to deploy an understanding of:

- The role of individuals in shaping historical events
- Why battles or wars were won or lost
- Why states or empires may have become powerful or declined
- A range of factors in causing an historical event
- The significance or consequences of a historical process, event or movement
- The way different sources of evidence might help develop an understanding of the past (e.g. photographs, buildings, archaeology)
- The historical context of a contemporary political or social issue (e.g. historical statues)

Marking principles

Section A: Sources

The mark schemes for the source questions will differ from year to year. There will be a series of shorter and longer answers with marks ranging from 2 to 12, with 4 marks representing approximately a paragraph's worth of material. A more detailed provisional mark scheme for the 2019 Entrance Paper has been provided to show this in practice.

Section B: Essays

Essays will be marked out of 20. No set answers are expected and scripts will be marked positively for what is there, rather than negatively for what is not.

Lower band: 1-6

At this level there may be some ideas, arguments or evidence deployed, but there is likely to be little organization, and answers will typically be characterized by irrelevance and a lack of focus.

Middle Band: 7-13

At this level there will be an attempt to answer the question, with a fair sense of organization. Some evidence will be deployed in support of the arguments made, but may be limited in scope. Historical explanations will be generally clear, but in places the sense of direction will be lost, or the answer will drift into irrelevance. A good narrative response, which only implicitly answers the question, may fit into the lower part of this band.

Upper Band: 14-20

Answers will be characterized by an analytical and argued approach. The demands of the question will be well-understood and there will be a range of supporting material. Explanations will be clear and developed, although some unevenness in focus or approach may be expected. The writing will be clear and unambiguous.

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