

# **National Certificate of Educational Achievement**

## **2011 Assessment Report**

### **History Level 3**

- 90656 Analyse and evaluate evidence in historical sources**
- 90657 Examine a significant decision made by people in history, in an essay**
- 90658 Examine a significant historical situation in the context of change, in an essay**

## COMMENTARY

A number of candidates made superficial generalisations unsupported by evidence or examples, and some provided extensive factual material that was not related to the question.

## STANDARD REPORTS

### 90656 Analyse and evaluate evidence in historical sources

#### ACHIEVEMENT

**Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They typically:**

- responded by using the language of the question as a stem to provide relevant focus to their answer
- identified and recorded information relevant to the question from the resources as supporting evidence in their answer
- identified the key idea or points of view in the source material (for parts (a) and (b)) and focused their answer on that key idea or points of view
- identified the historical relationships of cause and effect, and the general and specific in the source material (for parts (c) and (d)) and addressed both aspects of the relationship in their analysis
- made a genuine and valid judgement about the usefulness and/or reliability of the source material provided (for parts (e) and (f))
- analysed the source at a basic level, even if they were not able to put the source into an historical context or demonstrate informed knowledge.

#### NOT ACHIEVED

**Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They typically:**

- did not answer the question directly, described the content of the source or quoted long passages, but did not link the source detail specifically to the question
- did not use information from the resource to support their ideas e.g. made generalisations, but did not refer to the resource in any meaningful way or give any contextual information about the resource
- did not address both parts of the historical relationship questions
- provided generalised, prepared responses without reference to specific evidence from the resources themselves
- did not answer a question from each of the three sections of the paper (a-b, c-d, e-f).

#### ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit typically:**

- wrote in a structured, reasoned, and analytical manner, providing a generalisation supported by evidence or examples

- added some of their own knowledge of the wider historical context of the resource material into their answer
- used key terms (such as cause and effect, change and continuity, usefulness and reliability etc.) to explain and analyse the sources in some depth
- provided sound judgement and reasoning about the usefulness and/or reliability of the source material provided (parts (e) and (f)) with specific supporting evidence
- demonstrated an understanding of historical skills and transferred it to their answers to specific questions.

## **ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence typically:**

- structured their responses to ensure that they had covered what was asked, using examples from the resources and integrating their own wider knowledge
- provided lucid and perceptive answers that demonstrated greater depth of analysis/ evaluation and explanation of context
- integrated their own knowledge effectively into their answer and displayed a detailed understanding of the wider historical context of the resource
- demonstrated sophisticated understanding of what the resource showed an historian, how an historian might use the resource, and what additional information an historian might need to find out
- made reference to the ideas and views of well-known historians supporting their argument, where appropriate.

## **OTHER COMMENTS**

Some candidates seemed unaware of the expectations for AS 90656 such as that their own knowledge of the historical context surrounding the resource had to be shown to be awarded Achievement with Merit or Achievement with Excellence. There is a need to do more than simply describe the resource by the use of paraphrasing or extensive quotation – candidates must use their own knowledge to analyse the resource with specific reference to the question asked. Candidates should also ensure they are judging the usefulness and/or reliability of historical evidence with reference to specific examples drawn from the resource they are analysing.

It is essential that candidates recognise that in order to meet the requirements of the Achievement Standard, they must attempt a question from the sections of the paper covering each of the three achievement criteria (e.g. a or b, c or d, e or f).

## **90657 Examine a significant decision made by people in history, in an essay**

### **ACHIEVEMENT**

**Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They typically:**

- covered both parts of the question, even though, for some, coverage was not equally balanced across both question parts
- structured their essay to include an introduction, a series of linked paragraphs, and a conclusion

- supported general ideas with some relevant examples/evidence
- wrote in a mainly narrative or descriptive style with some evidence of analysis or evaluation
- demonstrated a basic knowledge of the factors and consequences of the selected decisions
- described in outline, key factors and consequences, though some irrelevant material may have been included.

### **NOT ACHIEVED**

**Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They typically:**

- did not plan their essay to ensure that both parts of the question were covered
- did not structure the essay with an introduction and conclusion directed to the question, or with a series of linked paragraphs
- made generalised statements that did not relate to the specific question or had little supporting evidence to develop their points
- wrote sections that were vague, irrelevant, or highly repetitive
- lacked understanding that could be used towards explaining the factors in the decision and its consequences
- used a prepared essay without adapting their knowledge to fit the question
- did not conform to the date parameters of the question.

### **ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit typically:**

- made a sustained, well supported, and logically developed argument using an essay format e.g. provided links between paragraphs, used topic sentences related to the essay question
- planned and provided a reasonably balanced coverage that linked to both parts of the question
- used detailed or comprehensive examples/evidence reflecting familiarity with a greater range of factors in the decision and its consequences
- explained and evaluated factors in the decision, and the consequences, though may have been stronger in one over the other.

### **ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence typically:**

- were well organized, often with a very detailed planning page
- had a fluent and articulate writing style that accurately explained and evaluated both the factors in the decision and the consequences
- wrote a clear argument supported by a convincing amount and depth of detail that directly answered the question
- wrote answers that were perceptive and/or comprehensive in scope, many demonstrating evidence of wide reading and understanding of contemporary historical interpretation.

## **OTHER COMMENTS**

A number of candidates for this standard appeared to be reliant on rote-learned answers to expected or similar questions and did not adapt their knowledge to the specific questions asked. Candidates who wrote a concise introduction, and developed a structured argument with clear use of supporting evidence, tended to attain higher grades. The highest-performing candidates provided specific, well substantiated responses to what was asked, especially the evaluative section, and made excellent use of the planning page to help structure their response.

### **90658 Examine a significant historical situation in the context of change, in an essay**

#### **ACHIEVEMENT**

**Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They typically:**

- covered both parts of the question, even though, for some, coverage was not equally balanced across both question parts
- structured their essay to include an introduction, a series of linked paragraphs, and a conclusion
- supported general ideas with some relevant examples/evidence
- wrote in a mainly narrative or descriptive style with some analysis or evaluation
- directed a basic knowledge to describing a changing situation and its influence on people in the designated time period.

#### **NOT ACHIEVED**

**Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They typically:**

- did not plan their essay to ensure that both parts of the question were covered
- did not structure the essay with an introduction and conclusion directed to the question, or with a series of linked paragraphs
- made generalised statements that did not relate to the specific question or had little supporting evidence
- wrote sections that were vague, irrelevant, or highly repetitive
- lacked understanding that could be used to describe the changing situation or its influence on people
- used a prepared essay without adapting their knowledge to fit the question
- did not conform to the date parameters of the question.

#### **ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit typically:**

- made a sustained, well supported, and logically developed argument using an essay format e.g. provided links between paragraphs, used topic sentences related to the essay question
- planned and provided a reasonably balanced coverage that linked to both parts of the question

- used detailed or comprehensive examples/evidence reflecting familiarity with the changing situation and its influence on people
- evaluated or analysed change in the situation over the time frame and its influence on the lives of people.

### **ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence typically:**

- were well organised, often with a very detailed planning page
- had a fluent and articulate writing style
- accurately explained and evaluated a historical development and its influence on people
- wrote a clear, focused, and convincing argument supported by depth of detail
- wrote answers that were perceptive and/or comprehensive in scope, many demonstrating evidence of wide reading and understanding of contemporary historical interpretation.

### **OTHER COMMENTS**

A number of candidates for this standard appeared to be reliant on rote-learnt answers to expected or similar questions and did not adapt their knowledge to the specific questions asked. Candidates who wrote a concise introduction, and developed a structured argument with clear use of supporting evidence, tended to attain higher grades. The highest-performing candidates provided specific, well substantiated responses to what was asked, especially the evaluative section, and made excellent use of the planning page to help structure their response.