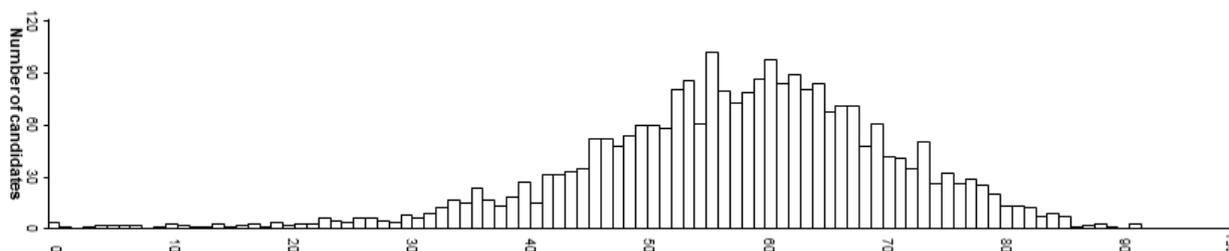




Summary report for candidates on the 2015 WACE examination in Modern History Stage 3

Year	Number who sat	Number of Absentees
2015	2576	58
2014	1650	19
2013	2532	39

Examination score distribution – Written



Summary

The examination paper was generally well received by candidates and teachers. The paper had four sections and a working time of three hours. The examination mean was 57.54%, which is in line with previous years. There was a range of scores from 1% to 92%. The standard deviation of the total examination was 13.49%, comparable with the 2014 standard deviation of 13.59%. The paper shows strong internal reliability of 0.93. The reliability of the four sections within the whole paper is consistent with correlations of 0.83, 0.83, 0.85 and 0.83 respectively.

Section means were:

Section One: Document study—Unit 3A	Mean 15.29 (/ 25)	Max 24.50	Min 0.00
Section Two: Essay— Unit 3A	Mean 14.51 (/ 25)	Max 24.50	Min 1.50
Section Three: Document study—Unit 3B	Mean 13.86 (/ 25)	Max 23.50	Min 0.00
Section Four: Essay— Unit 3B	Mean 14.57 (/ 25)	Max 25.00	Min 0.00

General comments

The paper as a whole functioned well. There seemed to be a slightly higher number of candidates who ran out of time this year compared to last year. The number of N/A marks seemed to be higher than in previous years. There were very limited Middle East context papers, and few China context papers. Overwhelmingly Russia was the most popular context. For the first time we saw candidates incorrectly choose an essay in unit 3B i.e. they chose to answer question 6 but with a Cold War Europe context.

Candidates were required to answer all sections in relation to the time periods and contexts they had studied in class. The balance of questions across the paper directly reflected both the broader concepts outlined in the course rationale and the recommended focus within particular units of Cohesion and Division (unit 3A) and Ideas that Shaped History (unit 3B).

In general, it was felt that:

- Questions 1(c) and 1(d) continue to be answered poorly and
- there are still far too many candidates who do not answer the specific questions, but simply write on those parts of the question which fall within the range of the material which they have specifically prepared for the examination.

This was particularly evident in the essay sections. It was disappointing for markers to continue to see little evidence in the essays of higher-order analysis. Too much 'narrative style' of writing occurred. There did seem to be a higher percentage of pre-prepared essays being shoe-horned into questions, and shoe-horned in poorly at that.

As in 2014, candidates found Questions 1(c) and 1(d) problematic in terms of engagement with the question and writing appropriate answers. This seemed to be evident across all contexts.

Advice for candidates

You need to read the documents thoroughly in order to identify and understand qualifying or counter-arguments to those expressed elsewhere in the document.

Comments on specific sections and questions

Section One: Document study—Unit 3A Attempted by 2564 Candidates

Mean 15.29% (/25) Max 24.50% Min 0.00%

With part 1(c), many candidates are still really only outlining the message, and then stating that the document is useful because it is delivering this message. Additionally, many candidates provide a list of omissions as evidence of its limitations, rather than engaging with the limitations of what is in the source. Candidates struggled to engage with Sources Six and Seven beyond just articulating their messages. Source Three in each case included a period with which candidates were familiar, but a period that candidates were perhaps less familiar with. It was interesting to see the candidates who had knowledge of politics across the elections, and those who resorted to describing the numbers in the absence of any knowledge. Part 1(e) still sees many candidates analysing the accuracy of individual sources in reflecting cohesion/division rather than the set as a whole, or seemingly lacking a clear framework of how to approach and write an answer to this question.

Section Two: Essay— Unit 3A Attempted by 2521 Candidates

Overall Mean 14.51% (/25) Max 24.50% Min 1.50%

Section Three: Document study—Unit 3B Attempted by 2552 Candidates

Mean 13.86% (/25) Max 23.50% Min 0.00%

Section Four: Essay— Unit 3B Attempted by 2530 Candidates

Overall Mean 14.57% (/25) Max 25.00% Min 0.00%