

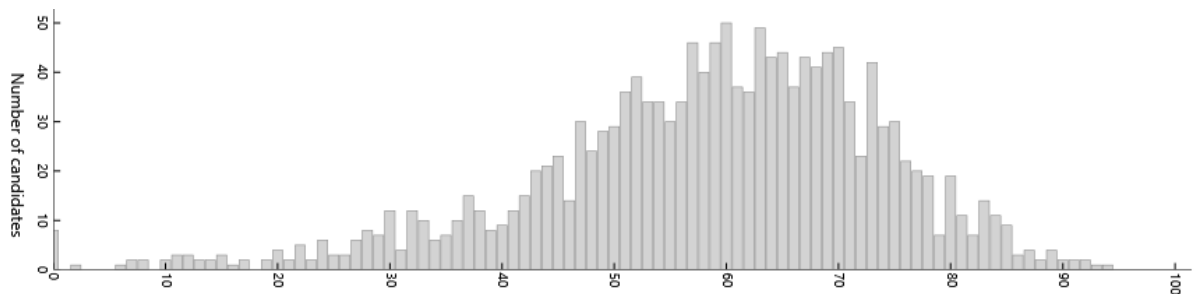


Summary report of the 2022 ATAR course examination report: Modern History

Year	Number who sat	Number of absentees
2022	1527	47
2021	1681	38
2020	1731	31
2019	1828	125

The number of candidates sitting and the number attempting each section of the examination can differ as a result of non-attempts across sections of the examination.

Examination score distribution—Written



Summary

Attempted by 1527 candidates Mean 57.93% Max 94.00% Min 0.00%

Section means were:

Section One: Source analysis—Unit 3	Mean 63.40%		
Attempted by 1519 candidates	Mean 15.85(/25)	Max 25.00	Min 0.00
Section Two: Essay--Unit 3	Mean 57.40%		
Attempted by 1481 candidates	Mean 14.35(/25)	Max 25.00	Min 0.00
Section Three: Source analysis—Unit 4	Mean 56.03%		
Attempted by 1506 candidates	Mean 14.01(/25)	Max 25.00	Min 0.00
Section Four: Essay--Unit 4	Mean 54.91%		
Attempted by 1455 candidates	Mean 13.73(/25)	Max 25.00	Min 0.00

General comments

Overall, the examination was well received and, as in previous years, the standard of responses from candidates indicated it was generally equitable and accessible. Russia and the Soviet Union 1914–1945 and The changing European world since 1945 remain by far the most popular electives studied in Units 3 and 4 respectively.

The issue of candidates not completing all sections of the paper in full continues, as has been noted in previous years. A large number of incomplete essays has been a factor in lower essay marks overall.

Advice for candidates

- In the Source analysis sections, you need to look carefully at the wording and marks allocations for each question, rather than simply assuming they are unchanged from previous years. The wording of the Source analysis questions, and the marks allocated to each question might change from year to year.
- Be sure to retain a focus on the specifics of the question at hand. For example, when asked to compare and contrast purpose make sure you are writing about the purpose of a source, the reasons behind its creation, and not reverting to a discussion of message/viewpoint. When discussing usefulness, you are encouraged to pay more attention to the provenance of the source (who produced it, when and where was it produced etc) rather than just its message/content. This allows you to explore more deeply how the source is useful in the context of the question.
- Ensure time management is a focus. Don't over-answer low mark questions. This may be a factor contributing to running out of time in the essay sections which potentially has a greater impact on your final mark.
- When writing in additional pages, state on which pages your answers are continued and label these additions with the question number.

Advice for teachers

- Encourage your students to use a few judicious quotes in key places rather than frequently quoting their text book, which will not add any weight to the response.
- Using content that predates the start of the study period for a chosen elective is worth addressing in class. Such content is acceptable if used effectively to construct an argument in response to the question. If it simply forms part of an extended narrative, then it is not considered valid. Clarify this use of content with your students. They are not obliged to refer to content outside the study period designated for an elective but may do so if referenced effectively in relation to the given question.
- Give your students essay writing practice under timed conditions with a focus on formulating sustained arguments throughout an extended piece of writing.
- Remind students that the order and allocation of marks for the Source analysis questions can and will vary year on year. The question types, however, will remain the same as per the examination design brief.

Comments on specific sections and questions

Generally, in the Source analysis sections, the topics and question structure were well-received, and they were considered to have an appropriate degree of difficulty. The electives were considered to be comparable both in terms of the similarity of source types and the complexity of the material.

Section One: Source analysis—Unit 3 – (25 Marks)

Attempted by 1519 candidates Mean 15.85(/25) Max 25.00 Min 0.00

The wording for Questions 1 parts (b) and (e) were generally well received, with feedback indicating that these questions either allowed more scope for evaluation, or reduced the number of elements that candidates needed to consider when answering the questions.

For Question 1 part (a) across all three electives, there were a number of candidates who tended to focus on the topic of the source/s rather than their message/s. Candidates needed to be aware that discussing the topic or focus of the source is not the same as its message. Instead, they should have identified the creator's viewpoint or position on the given topic. Question 1 part (b) across all electives provided limited reference to the provenance of the source. The origin of the data was an important element when evaluating usefulness and many candidates did not address this.

For Question 1 part (c), candidates in many cases provided only general contextual details, and lacked the specifics needed to achieve full marks. While candidates regularly used the information accompanying the source, they did not always offer specific insight into the ideas/people/events that formed the context of the source.

For Question 1 part (e), a focus on economic change seemed to be an accessible question to many candidates. However, there were many incidences of candidates discussing the insight provided by each source individually, rather than considering them as a set, which often resulted in a recapitulation of what each source showed. Some candidates focused too much on what was omitted from the sources. Stronger answers were clearly able to identify the kinds of economic changes reflected in the sources, and the extent to which the sources collectively provided insight into those changes.

Section Two: Essay – Unit 3 (25 Marks)

Attempted by 1481 candidates Mean 14.35(/25) Max 25.00 Min 0.00

The essay questions were generally well-received and perceived to be accessible and equitable. The first question of each elective was a recapitulation of the traditional debate question, which provided a contestable historical statement in the form of the quote and asked candidates the extent to which they agreed with the statement. Responses contained a greater instance of first-person language in introductions, but this lent itself to perhaps overly simplistic 'I agree' or 'I disagree' answers, rather than arguments that evaluated in more depth by exploring both sides of the question. The use of first person language, while not necessarily reflecting conventional historical writing, was not penalised in the marking of the essays.

Section Three: Source analysis – Unit 4 (25 Marks)

Attempted by 1506 candidates Mean 14.01(/25) Max 25.00 Min 0.00

Several issues were identified with questions in Section Three that cut across all electives. As with Section One, candidates often struggled to provide specific contextual details for Question 11 part (a), instead providing general overviews. For Question 11 part (b), many candidates struggled to avoid simplistic articulations of purpose and lapsed into comparing and contrasting messages rather than purpose. Stronger answers considered both the likely creator and audience of the sources in order to draw out detailed comparisons and contrasts.

For Question 11 part (c) there was often excessive description of the cartoon itself, rather than reference to key elements as part of an explanation of the message of the source. It is also to be noted that the irony implicit in the message of all three cartoons was missed by a larger number of candidates than expected. For Question 11 part (d), a greater number of candidates structured their responses in ways that enabled them to achieve high marks, which was encouraging.

For Question 11 part (e), candidates, instead of identifying the leaders and/or leadership elements that are represented in the sources, and then evaluating their importance, either described what is shown in each source, or commented on how well the source depicted the leader/s. There was also a lack of consideration of the period as a whole when evaluating the leaders/leadership represented in the sources.

Section Four: Essay – Unit 4 (25 Marks)

Attempted by 1455 candidates

Mean 13.73(/25)

Max 25.00

Min 0.00

Question 13 in The changing European world since 1945 elective was attempted by 64% of candidates, but other than that there was a pleasing spread of candidates attempting the various questions in each section which suggested the essay questions were largely accessible and equitable.