

# PRINCIPAL EXAMINER'S REPORT



BOTSWANA  
EXAMINATIONS  
COUNCIL

## BSSE HISTORY

2025

## PAPER 1: WRITTEN PAPER

### General Comments

This report presents analysis of the performance of candidates who sat for the exam based on the newly introduced syllabus for Outcome Based Education (OBE). As the 2025 cohort represents the initial group to be assessed using this syllabus, there is no comparison of their performance with those of the previous years. However, it is worth acknowledging the fact that there were slight changes in the structure of the paper as stated below:

- There were no source-based questions.
- The paper was divided into four modules of the syllabus.
- Two questions allocated to each module
- A total of eight questions and each carrying 20 marks.
- A candidate was expected to choose one question from each module.
- Total of 80 marks.
- Duration 2 hours 30 minutes.

Generally, outstanding performances, average performances and below-par performances were observed in all Centres. It is worth noting that quite a significant number of candidates infringed the rubric by answering both questions in one module, instead of answering one question in each module. This was noticeable commonly in Modules 1 and 2 questions. This suggests that these two modules somehow were thoroughly covered hence making the questions very accessible to many candidates. The topics under these Modules cover information from Stone Age period, through Iron Age to pre-independence Botswana. Module 3, which covers developments in the post-independence Botswana, was not sufficiently attempted by most candidates across Centres. Module 4, which covers slavery, colonialism and race relations, was barely attempted by candidates across all Centres and was also poorly performed compared to the other three modules. Perhaps this could be attributed to time factor, i.e. Centres may not have adequately cover the content within the stipulated time frame. Thus, for Module 4 questions, candidates' responses were generally common-sense in nature. Hence, the following were the most popular questions across all Centres: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. However, Centres are advised to cover all the four Modules adequately for the benefit of the candidates.

### Comments on Individual Items

#### MODULE ONE: EXPLORE THE FUNDAMENTALS OF HISTORY.

##### 1 Different activities were practised during the Stone Age period.

This was a popular question across all Centres.

##### (a) Describe any two meanings given to the term Stone Age.

This part question was well answered by most candidates across a broad spectrum of Centres. Candidates who scored four marks were able to demonstrate an understanding of the term as both a distinct archaeological period (characterised by the use of stone tools), and a general

way of life of the communities living in that period (hunters, gatherers). Centres are implored to take note that in defining such historical concepts, there is need to mention both the period and the way of life of the people who lived during that period.

**(b) Explain any two limitations of the cultural explanations of the origins of humankind.**

Candidates answering this question were expected to identify, describe, explain and provide evidence for two significant drawbacks of using cultural explanations on origins of humankind. A good number of candidates who attempted this part question managed to satisfy the demands of Level 3. Candidates whose answers were mere descriptions of the cultural explanations could not progress beyond two marks. Although not so prevalent, in some Centres, candidates were unable to provide evidence showing the weaknesses of the cultural explanations. Centres are advised to pay attention to this as they prepare candidates for their terminal examination.

**(c) 'The following activities were equally important in the development of the Khoikhoi before 1800.**

**(i) pastoralism;**

**(ii) bartering;**

**(iii) fishing.'**

**How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer referring to (i), (ii) and (iii) above.**

Across almost all Centres, candidates were able to respond correctly to this part-question. Candidates were expected to critically evaluate the relative importance of pastoralism, bartering and fishing in the development of the Khoikhoi society prior to 1800. Candidates who scored eight (8) marks, that is, those who reached Level 4, did not merely define or describe these terms but were able to analyse how each factor contributed to Khoikhoi's socio-economic and political structure. Further, those who were able to conclude scored level 5 (10 marks). These outstanding candidates were able to argue that one of the three factors, e.g., pastoralism was arguably more important than others. This is quite commendable. However, there were noticeable cases where candidates mistook the Khoikhoi for the San or rather treated them as the same group. This error cannot be ignored, thus leads to loss of marks. Centres are, therefore, encouraged to teach their candidates to be vigilant when answering questions for terminal examinations.

### 2 Significant developments took place during the Iron Age period.

A vast majority of candidates across all Centres attempted this question and performance was fairly good.

#### (a) Describe any two social changes brought by the introduction of iron technology among Iron Age societies.

A fairly done part-question. Candidates answering this question were expected to identify and describe two distinct ways in which the introduction of iron technology altered the relationships, social structures and lifestyles of Iron Age communities. Restrictive as this question may be many candidates were able to bring about two correct social changes brought by iron technology hence making this part-question very assessable to many candidates. However, there were isolated cases where candidates' responses were based on general non-social changes. Centres are, therefore, encouraged to teach their candidates how to handle restricted items like those focusing on social or economic factors only as opposed to open changes that could either be social or economic.

#### (b) Explain any two factors that contributed to the collapse of Toutswe mogala.

Candidates displayed a thorough understanding of the factors that contributed to the collapse of Toutswe mogala. A substantial number of candidates, therefore, reached Level 4 (6 marks) as they were able to identify, describe and explain factors or provided evidence showing how these factors caused the collapse of Toutswe mogala. Quite a number of candidates did very well on this part-question, something indicative of the fact that Centres taught this learning objective very well. However, there were few cases of stray responses which showed that some candidates knew completely nothing about factors which led to the collapse of Toutswe mogala. This showed lack of preparedness on their part.

#### (c) 'Mining was the most important factor that contributed to the development of the Domboshaba chiefdom.' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer using two other factors and the one stated in the question.

A poorly performed question across almost all Centres. The highest mark that candidates could get was either Level 3 (4 marks) or Level 4 (6 marks) out of 10 marks. For candidates to arrive at Level 4 (8 marks), they had to explain three factors, one of which is already given in the part question. In some cases, candidates ignored the given factor and as such candidates could not obtain the highest mark at level 4, that is, they remained at 6 marks. Furthermore, the poor marks that were obtained by some candidates emanated from the descriptive nature of their responses. It is also worth noting that some candidates across all Centres could not correctly appraise the importance of mining among the Domboshaba chiefdom. Such candidates' responses were tainted by references to the mining of minerals such as diamond, coal and copper among others, and the creation of employment opportunities. Centres are advised to instil in candidates the understanding that historical content and analysis is confined to appraisal of events that happened in the human past.



**MODULE 2 EXAMINE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PRE-INDEPENDENCE BOTSWANA FROM 1800 TO 1966.**

**3 European settlers contributed significantly to societal changes during the pre-colonial period.**

This was a very popular question across all Centres.

**(a) Describe any two aspects of the political lifestyle of the peoples of pre-independence Botswana.**

The part question was well answered by most candidates across a broad spectrum of Centres. Candidates who did well in this part question, that is those who scored four marks, were those who could identify and describe any two political aspects of the peoples of pre-independence Botswana. Candidates whose answers were mere identifications of historical facts could not progress beyond one mark. Although not so prevalent, in some Centres, candidates appeared unable to draw a distinction between what constituted the social, economic and political aspects of the life of the peoples of pre-independence Botswana. Centres are advised to pay attention to this as they prepare candidates for their terminal examination.

**(b) Explain any two ways in which women contributed to the development of Tswana societies before independence.**

This is noticeably new content in the syllabus. Candidates performed poorly in this part-question. In this question, candidates were expected to identify, describe and explain two distinct historically accurate role that women played in Tswana society prior to Botswana's independence in 1966, which included but are not limited to ruling as regents and educating girls about societal norms and customs during initiation schools (bojale). Candidates who scored six marks went beyond simply listing and/or describing the roles but explained how these activities contributed to the socio-economic and political development of their communities. However, majority of the candidates used common-sense describing current affairs activities carried out by women. As a result, candidates' responses on this part question clustered at Level 2 (2 marks). Centres are, therefore, encouraged to teach this learning objective giving reference to historical evidence.

**(c) Early European settlers had a positive impact on the lives of the peoples of pre-colonial Botswana. 'How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer.'**

Candidates performed fairly on this part-question, i.e., most candidates' responses barely performed beyond Level 4 (6 marks). To have answered this question effectively, candidates should have demonstrated a balanced, critical understanding of the 19th Century interaction between early European settlers (missionaries, traders and hunters) and the indigenous Batswana communities. A high scoring response at Level 4 (8 marks) would move beyond a simple positive versus negation explanation but also reaches a reasonable conclusion, i.e., analyses the nuances of this relationship, arguing 'how far' they agree or arguing that the impacts were mixed depending on the specific time, place and group involved. In a concluding statement, for candidates to rise to Level 5 (10 marks), candidates should take a clear stance, e.g., 'While early European settlers brought improvements in literacy, agricultural techniques and a temporary shield against Boer expansion, their overall impact was disruptive, leading to

cultural polarisation, loss of land autonomy, and economic strain through taxation. Therefore, the impact was mixed rather than purely positive.’ Centres should equip candidates with the right skills for answering high order questions.

#### **4 Different strategies were used to reconstruct Tswana states before independence.**

This was not a popular question across all Centres.

##### **(a) Describe any two meanings given to the concept nation building.**

This part question turned out to be inaccessible to candidates across all Centres. Candidates were required to identify two distinct meanings or interpretations of the concept nation building prior to Botswana’s independence in 1966, e.g., desire to strengthen a morafe or merging into a broader Tswana identity, oneness, tolerance, etc. This was a low-order question, but the least candidates could score on this part-question was Level 2 (2 marks). They tended to confuse meanings with strategies. The assumption is that Centres had not thoroughly covered the learning objectives. Thus, Centres are advised to prepare candidates for their terminal examination in time.

##### **(b) Explain any two nation-building strategies that were used by Dikgosi before independence.**

This part question also turned out to be inaccessible to candidates across all Centres. However, candidates who were able to acquire Level 4 (6 marks) are those who identified, described and clearly explained two distinct, historically recognised methods used by Batswana dikgosi to unify, expand or strengthen their merafe (like kgameo system, incorporation, power sharing, etc) before Botswana gained independence in 1966. Quite a sizeable number of candidates across Centres could only reach the descriptive level and scored a maximum of 3 marks. Thus, Centres are advised to expose candidates to relevant content of all specific objectives of the assessment syllabus.

##### **(c) The following factors equally threatened the stability of Tswana societies during the pre-independence era:**

- (i) conflict over land;**
- (ii) bartering;**
- (iii) servile position of minorities’.**

**How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer referring to (i), (ii) and (iii) above.**

To reach Level 4 (8 marks), candidates should have correctly described the factors given in the part question as well as explained how each one of the factors threatened the stability of Tswana societies during the pre-independence era. However, not many candidates across all Centres were able to do this. The responses proffered showed a lack of content mastery on the part of candidates across the Centres. As an example, candidates tended to use general information on conflict over land and bartering and failed dismally to explain servile position of minorities factor. On rare occasions candidates were able to correctly describe and placed the factors

given in the question in their right historical context. Centres are implored to devote attention to this content in future.

### MODULE 3: ANALYSE DEVELOPMENTS IN POST INDEPENDENCE BOTSWANA

#### 5 Significant socio-economic and political changes that took place in post-independence Botswana.

This was yet another popular question amongst candidates across all Centres.

**(a) Describe any two social changes that took place in Botswana after independence.**

A sizeable number of candidates who attempted this part-question fared well as they reached Level 3 (4 marks). All that was required of the candidates was to evaluate two social developments that took place in the period after 1966. Any other social development that fell outside the stipulated time was not credited. Much as most candidates were able to access the part-question, it should be noted that in some cases, there appeared to be blurred lines between the social and economic changes. It is this lack of discernment that directly contributed to candidates being unable to score decent marks in this part-question.

**(b) Explain any two ways in which Dr. Gaositwe Chiepe contributed to the developments in Botswana after 1966.**

The part question was inaccessible to a vast majority of candidates across all Centres. To arrive at Level 4 (6 marks), candidates were required to identify, describe and explain two distinct, accurate historical contributions made by Dr. Chiepe to Botswana's development following its independence in 1966. The significant contributions included amongst others the formulation of the education system, securing donor aid, mineral negotiation, etc. Candidates had to provide details on how her actions impacted the nation. It appears candidates did not have knowledge, and their responses were merely hypothetical and could only attract Level 2 (2 marks). Centres are advised to expose candidates to all learning objectives in the assessment syllabus.

**(c) 'The relocation of the minority groups from their ancestral land by the government of Botswana has economically benefitted the minority groups.' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer.**

The part question was not accessible to a significant proportion of candidates across all Centres. Across Centres, candidates struggled to provide the correct economic impacts of the relocation of minority groups, e.g., Basarwa people from the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR) to New Xade and Kaudwane in Botswana. The question required a balanced, critical analysis by engaging with the complexities of state development policies versus traditional livelihoods. Even with this question, candidates displayed lack of knowledge of the historical content of this particular learning objective. Quite a sizeable number of candidates with their general imaginary responses reached Level 4 (6 marks). They could not reach Level 4 (8 marks). Centres are advised to expose candidates to all learning objectives in the assessment syllabus.

**6 Relations between Botswana and other countries have been shaped by Botswana's foreign policy.**

This question was not popular amongst candidates across all Centres.

**(a) Describe any two approaches to foreign policy.**

This is a low order question, hence, a vast majority of candidates who attempted this part-question did so well in it. Candidates could easily acquire Level 3 (4 marks) by clearly identifying and describing two separate approaches, e.g., bilateralism, multilateralism, etc. Centres are commended for the job well done.

**(b) Explain any two ways in which Botswana benefitted from her relations with Cuba.**

Relatively new content in the syllabus. Majority of candidates who attempted this part-question performed poorly in it. It showed that they literally lacked knowledge and their responses were pigeonholed by guess work. A handful of those who scooped Level 4 (6 marks) were able to demonstrate knowledge of the bilateral cooperation between the two nations, focusing of specific sectors such as healthcare, education and sports.

**(c) 'The preservation of peaceful relations with neighbouring states is the most important benefit of Botswana's foreign policy.' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer using two other factors and the one stated in the question.**

A fairly done part-question. Many candidates were able to explain how preservation of peaceful relations with neighbouring states as the most important benefit of Botswana's foreign policy. They were able to bring two other factors in addition to the preservation of peace relations with neighbouring states. This is commendable. However, some candidates restricted themselves only to the preservation of peaceful relations with neighbouring states and ignored the lead that they should explain their answer 'using two other factors.' Other candidates went to the extent of avoiding the factor given in the question. Centres are encouraged to teach their candidates how to handle items of this nature.

### MODULE 4: EXAMINE THE IMPACT OF SLAVERY, COLONIALISM AND RACE RELATIONS

**7 The demand for slaves destabilised west African communities during the 16th and 17th Centuries.**

A very unpopular question attempted by a few candidates out of desperation to make a choice between the last two questions. It was clear that many Centres did not teach this module, maybe due to time constraints.

**(a) Describe any two factors which contributed to the birth of slavery.**

Candidates fared very badly on this part-question across all Centres which attempted it. A substantial number of candidates remained at Level 0 (0 marks) as they struggled even to identify factors which contributed to the birth of slavery. In this part-question, candidates could only score the total number of marks, i.e., Level 3 (4 marks) by describing two distinct factors which led to the birth of slavery.

**(b) Explain any two methods which were used to acquire slaves during the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade period.**

A fairly attempted part-question. Many candidates were able to come up with two distinct methods used to acquire slaves during the Trans-Atlantic Slave trade period. Still, the problem of failure to explain the points persisted and this left most candidates at Level 2 (2 marks). Other candidates provided partially explained factors hence they remained at the lowest mark of Level 3, i.e., Level 3 (3 marks). It was clear that candidates' responses were merely guess work and the topic was not adequately taught.

**(c) 'The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade disrupted the socio-economic lifestyle of the indigenous people of Africa.' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer.**

A mixture of outstanding and poor performances was recorded in this part question across all Centres. Some candidates provided correct answers whose only shortcoming was that they were merely descriptions of the impact of Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade on indigenous people of Africa. Answers of this nature could only reach Level 2 (2–3 marks). In some instances, some candidates discussed the effects of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade on the Africans in the diaspora and not indigenous Africans in Africa. Responses of this type were marked irrelevant as the question required candidates to focus on how the socio-economic lifestyles of the indigenous people of Africa were affected by the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. Outstanding performances were achieved by candidates who could describe and explain both the negative and positive results of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. Here it is important to note that candidates could only score 8 marks if they gave balanced arguments, that is, one negative effect and two positive effects or vice versa. A one-sided argument or answer left a candidate at Level 4 (6 marks). Centres are implored to make note of this when they prepare candidates for the terminal examination.

**8 Pan-Africanists contributed to the liberation of the African continent.**

This was the least popular question attempted by very few candidates from a few Centres. It was clear that many Centres did not teach topics under Module 4. Centres are advised to teach all modules thoroughly for the benefit of the candidates.

**(a) Describe any two ways in which William Du Bois contributed to the birth of Pan-Africanism.**

A few candidates who attempted this part-question did not do well as it showed that they lacked knowledge of the topic. Their responses were general to Pan-Africanism and further, others confused William Du Bois with other pan-Africanist leaders like Kwame Nkrumah and Marcus Garvey. A substantial number of candidates remained at Level 0 (0 marks) and quite a handful reached Level 2 (2 marks). Candidates could only score the total number of marks, i.e., Level 3 (4 marks) by describing two ways in which William Du Bois contributed to the birth of Pan Africanism.

**(b) Explain any two ways in which Pan-Africanism was understood in Africa.**

It was on this part-question where candidates displayed total lack of knowledge about Pan Africanism. A sizeable number of candidates were marooned at Level 2 (2 marks) as the only relevant factor they were able to identify and describe was independence – but failed to explain



it. Quite a handful were able to reach Level 3 (4 marks). Centres are, therefore, advised to teach all the topics for the benefit of candidates.

- (c) **‘Kwame Nkrumah contributed significantly to the liberation of African countries from colonial rule.’ How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer.**

This is yet another part-question where candidates displayed lack of knowledge about Nkrumah and the liberation of African countries from colonial rule. However, it was noticed that, in certain, other Centres did well in this part-question as they reached Level 4 (6 – 8 marks). Not only did such candidates describe three ways in which Nkrumah contributed to the liberation of African countries from colonial rule, there was a gallant effort on the part of the candidates to explain how Nkrumah valued independence. Centres that taught this content are somehow commended for a job well done while those that may have not are implored to cover it in the future as it is one of the mandatory topics in the syllabus.

## PAPER 2: WRITTEN PAPER

### General Comments

The 2025 History paper was the first examination of Botswana Secondary School Education, also known as Outcome Based Education (OBE). The structure of the paper slightly differs from the BGCSE paper. For example, in terms of duration, total marks and structure of questions. But the issue of two source-based questions disadvantaged some candidates as they could not finish writing possibly because more time was spent on assessing both question 3 and 4 before making the final choice.

Generally, the questions were very clear, addressed syllabus objectives and tested the skills as per requirements of OBE. The questions were also up to the standard of the candidates. There were no ambiguous or highly pitched questions which could have disadvantaged the candidates. The syllabus spread was satisfactory. The language used especially in textual sources could easily be comprehended by the candidates.

Generally, candidates' performance was average. The most popular question in Section A was Question 1. Question 2 was answered by few candidates who mostly gave irrelevant answers. It was clear the content on Performance criteria 5.3.5 and 5.4.1 were not covered at school level. Most candidates performed fairly in Section B than Section A. Majority of them scored between 30 and 35 out of 60. But there were Centres where candidates were scoring between 40 and 50 out of 60. It was clear that some schools religiously used the sample papers (both the question paper and the marking key) to train their candidates on answering techniques. Such candidates could use words such as 'the motive of the author/cartoonist' which was very rare in majority of Centres.

The pictorial sources in Section B were clear and none of them had confusing features which could be misinterpreted by candidates. Just like in the previous years of BGCSE pictorial sources were easily referenced to, compared to textual sources.

With the 2025 cohort there were some bizarre writings from candidates. Some of them identified in certain Centres include the following:

- In some Centres, most candidates' failed to follow the instructions in the paper and had rubric infringement. They either answered only one part of the question in Section A or they answered only one or two parts of question 1, for example they will answer 3 (a) or (e) only.
- Some candidates failed to number the questions attempted.
- There was also the use of informal language like slang, abbreviation and shorthand.
- Some candidates in certain Centres failed to paragraph their essays.

The other observation made was that Question 3 in Section B was from a familiar topic, Causes of World War I. In some Centres there were indications that the topic was taught in detail as candidates could bring good historical knowledge without reference to the source. Just like with BGCSE weaker candidates were able to score 6/40 by just giving surface description of the sources or paraphrasing. Question 4 on The League of Nations was also fairly answered especially 4 (a) and 4 (c). But majority of Centres went for question 3.

Centres are encouraged to teach the candidates how to handle source-based questions. It does not serve any purpose to equip candidates with historical knowledge with no skills of interpretation, analysis and evaluation. The 'motive' of the author in Source based questions. In the 2025 cohort, candidates performed poorly in questions 1 (b) and 3 (c), and question 4 (a) and 4 (b). For some good candidates, they showed their historical knowledge in question 1 (a) and 3 (a), 3 (b) and 3 (d).

## Comments on Individual Items

### Section A

Instructions for (a) questions

1 mark for each point that has been identified.

1 mark for the development of the point identified.

The 2025 BSSE questions for Section B (a) parts, were specific about the number of items needed for each questions. They were not general.

Instructions for (b) questions

Level 1	Description / identification of factors / general information	
	General information	[1]
	Identification of factors	[2]
	Description of factors	[3]
Level 2	Explanation of one factor	
	One factor partially explained	[4]
	One factor fully explained	[5]
Level 3	Explanation of two factors	
	Two factors both partially explained	[6]
	Two factors with one partially explained	[7]
	Two factors fully explained	[8]
Level 4	Explanation of three factors.	
	Three factors all partially explained	[9]
	Three factors with one fully explained and two partially explained	[10]
	Three factors with two fully explained and one partially explained	[11]
	Three factors all fully explained.	[12]

The popular question with candidates was 2. It was clear that it was taught well and in-depth at school level. Question 3 was attempted by very few desperate candidates who failed to score significant marks. It was clear they had no historical information on that question.

- 1 A Very popular question across Centres. Part (a) was very well answered and (b) was poorly done across Centres.

**(a) Outline any four terms of the Treaty of Versailles signed with Germany in 1919.**

The question was clear and specific to a particular treaty and country. It was a very open question where candidates could write about territorial and non-territorial terms. Most candidates across Centres did very well on this question as they were able to identify and

describe the terms well. Such candidates scored between 6 and 8 marks. Only few candidates identified the terms without outlining.

**(b) Explain any three ways in which Hitler's foreign policy contributed to the outbreak of World War II.**

A very popular question across Centres BUT not well answered as expected. It was clear candidates had historical information on the causes of World War II by Hitler in general, but failed to focus on the foreign policy. Some wrote about Hitler's rise to power, Hitler's domestic policy or consolidation of power which was irrelevant to the question. Some candidates in certain Centres did fairly on this question as they were able to raise their answers to Level 3, thus scoring fairly above average marks. Overall, the performance on this question was not good.

2 A very unpopular question across Centres, inaccessible and not well answered on both parts.

**(a) Describe any four events of the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962.**

The question proved not to be popular across Centres and those who attempted it provided irrelevant answers. They failed to bring correct historical information. It was clear that candidates were not familiar with the topic.

**(b) Explain any three factors that led to the rise of the United States of America (USA) as a global economic power after 1945.**

The question was also not popular and poorly done across Centres. Candidates had no content on USA. It was clear most candidates were not familiar the topic.

### Section B

3 The title of the question was 'Causes of World War I.

It was a very popular question across Centres. In some cases, all candidates in one Centre chose question 3 instead of 4.

**(a) Study Source A. What is the message of the source? Explain your answer using the source and your knowledge.**

It was a pictorial source. The question was well done by majority of candidates across Centres. The demand of the question was such that candidates were to make use of the pictorial source and historical knowledge to show the message of the source. Candidates were expected to have 2 points. They should be able to pick two actions going on in the source and support it with historical knowledge. Majority of candidates across Centres were able pick that the source is about the invasion of Belgium by Germany as part of the Schlieffen plan. They managed to interpret the source well and scored at Level 3.

**(b) Study Source B. Do you believe the claims made in this source? Explain your answer using the source and your knowledge.**

It was a textual source. The language used was simple and could be comprehended by candidates. The question was fairly done by a few Centres. Candidates were expected to pick one claim from the source and support it with contextual knowledge. They were also expected to use contextual knowledge to portray the motive of the author. Candidates were rewarded with

1 mark for taking a stand or paraphrasing the source, e.g. Yes I believe the claims or no, I do not believe the claims. Some candidates in certain Centres took a stand of Yes or No and paraphrased the source instead of providing historical information. Some candidates could not pick the claims from the source and instead gave general information on the 'Blank Cheque' and how Germany was going to support Austria-Hungary in case she goes to war with Russia, which put them at level 2. Some could not explain the blank cheque. They related the source to historical information but failed to reference the source. In some Centres candidates managed to give historical information attached to the source with claims and thus scoring high marks. Most candidates failed to show the motive of the author and instead they just picked two claims from the source and supported it with historical information which still took them to Level 4.

- (c) Study Source C. Does Source C prove that nationalism in the Balkan states contributed to the outbreak of World War I? Explain your answer using the source and your knowledge.**

It was a pictorial source. It seemed a rich source on the Balkan crisis with many details to pick but unfortunately many candidates across Centres failed to interpret it. The contents of the picture were clear. It seemed to be accessible to few candidates who were able to unpack the details of the First and Second Balkan Wars. Many found it too abstract looking at the kind of answers they provided. Most candidates across Centres failed to link the source to the Balkan crisis and how they contributed to World War I. Some candidates dwelt more on the Sarajevo assassination which was not portrayed by the source. Some gave very good historical information on the Balkan wars but failed to reference the source, thus reaching level 2 only. Candidates were supposed to provide contextual knowledge and motive of the author with reference to the source. Overall, the question was poorly done by majority of candidates across Centres.

- (d) Study Sources D. Why was this cartoon published in July 1914? Explain your answer using the source and your knowledge.**

It was also a pictorial source. A very rich source with many details. The caption at the bottom of the source provided enough information about the source which made it very much accessible to majority of the candidates. Most candidates across Centres were able to access this question and use the source effectively. The source was well interpreted, and many candidates provided brilliant answers which took them to Level 4. Even though candidates were not explicit in providing the purpose and intended impact of the cartoon on the audience, they managed to pick two issues from the source and supported it with historical information. Candidates were able to pick the conflict between Austria-Hungary and Serbia, the support of Serbia from Russia and the confidence that Serbia had to go to war with Austria-Hungary in 1914. Overall, the question on Source D was well answered.

- (e) Study Sources E and F. How far do the two sources agree on the causes of World War I? Explain your answer using the sources and your knowledge.**

These were textual sources. The language was clear and could be comprehended by candidates especially Source E. The question required candidates to compare two sources. Some candidates interpreted each source independently. Just like in the BGCSE syllabus there

is still a challenge on the comparative question as some candidates failed to compare two sources and instead evaluated only one source. Some took a stand stating that the sources agree or do not agree and thus can score only 1 mark out of 8 marks. Most candidates gave a simple description of the sources or overall message of the source or sources without reference to the source. Many of them failed to come up with historical facts to explain where the sources agree or disagree. There was a lot of paraphrasing of the sources just like in the previous years. Most candidates across Centres evaluated Source E fairly well and were able to prove that it shows that Germany's desire to acquire colonies antagonised other European powers. It seemed like they comprehended it well as they could relate it to the Moroccan crisis. This means by evaluating one source, candidates could only score 4 or 5 marks out of 8 marks, putting them at Level 3. Source F was poorly evaluated by majority of Centres all Centres as they could not give a critical evaluation of the source. They gave brief information on the mobilisation of Russia and the 'blank cheque' given to Austria-Hungary by Germany. In some cases, candidates gave good historical information without attaching it to any source, leaving them at level 2.

**(f) Study all the sources. How far do these sources prove that Germany was to blame for the outbreak of World War I? Explain your answer using all the sources.**

This is a summative question. The candidates are expected to answer the question by giving a summative evaluation of all the sources. The assumption is that some sources prove that Germany was to blame for the outbreak of World War I while others do not. Therefore, candidates were expected to be in a position to identify sources that support and those that do not support the two sides of argument. To reach at least 9 marks both sides of the argument should be discussed. Reference to the source is still important but candidates are expected to just simply write "as in Source A" or "as suggested by Source C" because the assumption is that all the sources have been interpreted in the previous questions.

Compared to the previous years, this part of the question was well done by most candidates across Centres. They scored good marks as most of them reached Level 4. Most candidates across Centres were able to analyse the individual sources as per the requirements of the question. There were a few candidates who simply gave a description of the sources without linking it to the question. In some instances, some candidates paraphrased the sources, thus scoring low marks as they could only reach either level 1 or 2. Some gave general information on Germany's contribution to World War I without attaching it to any source, which put them at Level 2 of the answer. Some candidates failed to reach a conclusion as summary of the sources based on the requirements of the question. Those candidates who attempted to reach a conclusion only summarised previous point (repetition) without evaluation.

Where some candidates failed to grasp the message of the source like in Source C and F, it had a ripple effect into this part of the question as they lacked the skills to transcend to higher levels. Just like with BGCSE, some desperate candidates who lacked historical information on why Germany was to blame for World War I resorted to re-writing the textual sources or paraphrasing or simple description of the sources.

**4** The title of the question was 'The League of Nations.

Though it was not very popular like question 3, those who attempted this question did fairly well especially at 4 (a), (c) and (e).

**(a) Study Source A. What is the message of the source? Explain your answer using the source and your knowledge.**

The question was well done by majority of candidates. A pictorial source was used, and the details of the source were clear to most candidates. The question was well done by majority of candidates across Centres. The demand of the question was such that candidates were to make use of the pictorial source and historical knowledge to show the message of the source. Candidates were expected to have 2 points. They should be able to pick two actions going on in the source and support it with historical knowledge. Majority of candidates across Centres were able pick that the source is about the weakness of the League of Nations with the absence of USA. They managed to interpret the source well and scored at Level 3.

**(b) Study Source B. Do you believe the claims made in this source? Explain your answer using the source and your knowledge.**

It was a textual source. The language used was fair and could be comprehended by majority of candidates. Unfortunately, the source was poorly done and there was a lot of paraphrasing. It looks like most candidates failed to comprehend the source and thus failed to apply historical knowledge in their interpretation. They failed to provide the claims and instead dwelt on the invasion of Abyssinia by Italy without linking it to the source. Candidates were expected to pick one claim from the source and support it with contextual knowledge. They were also expected to use contextual knowledge to portray the motive of the author. Candidates were rewarded with 1mark for taking a stand or paraphrasing the source., e.g. Yes I believe the claims or No, I do not believe the claims. Most candidates failed to show the motive of the author and instead they just picked one claim from the source and supported it with historical information which took them to Level 3.

**(c) Study Source C. Does Source C prove that the League of Nations was an effective organisation? Explain your answer using the source and your knowledge.**

It was a pictorial source. A very popular source and the question was well answered across Centres. The contents of the picture were clear. It seemed a rich source on the Bulgarian crisis with many details to pick. It seemed to be accessible to many candidates who were able to unpack the details of the conflict between Greece and Bulgaria, and the role played by the League in conflict resolution. It was clear majority of Centres had taught the topic on success of the League in detail, and it was well comprehended. Most candidates across Centres failed to link the source to the Balkan crisis and how they contributed to World War I. Some candidates dwelt more on the Sarajevo assassination which was not portrayed by the source. Very few candidates gave irrelevant information on the source. Candidates were supposed to provide contextual knowledge and motive of the author with reference to the source. Overall, the question was well done by majority of candidates across Centres.

- (d) Study Sources D. Why was this cartoon published in 1933? Explain your answer using the source and your knowledge.**

It was also a pictorial source. A very rich source with many details. But most candidates across Centres failed to access this question and to use the source effectively. The figure in the source, 'King Kong' was interpreted as representing Germany by most candidates. The source was poorly interpreted, and many candidates simply described the disarmament conference as a failure without attaching it to the details of the source. Candidates were not explicit in providing the purpose and intended impact of the cartoon on the audience, but a few of them managed to pick two issues from the source and supported it with historical information. Overall, the question on Source D was poorly answered.

- (e) Study Sources E and F. How far do the two sources agree on the ineffectiveness of the League of Nations? Explain your answer using the sources and your knowledge.**

These were textual sources. The language was clear and could be comprehended by candidates especially Source E. The question required candidates to compare two sources. Some candidates interpreted each source independently. Just like in the BGCSE syllabus there is still a challenge on the comparative question as some of candidates still fail to compare two sources and instead evaluate only one source. Some take a stand stating that the sources agree or do not agree and thus can score only 1 mark out of 8 marks. Most candidates gave a simple description of the sources or overall message of the source or sources without reference to the source. For example, in Source E they discussed how Germany was the only country to disarm and in Source F they stated the failure of the league to impose sanctions on Italy during the invasion of Abyssinia. Many of them failed to come up with historical facts to explain where the sources agree or disagree. There was a lot of paraphrasing of the sources just like in the previous years. Most candidates across Centres evaluated Source F fairly well and were able to prove that the League was powerless on imposing sanctions on the aggressors and they made other countries lose hope on it. This means by evaluating one source, candidates could only score 4 or 5 marks out of 8marks, putting them at Level 3. In some cases, candidates gave good historical information without attaching it to any source, leaving them at level 2.

- (f) Study all the sources. How far do these sources prove that the League of Nations failed to bring stability in the world? Explain your answer using all the sources.**

This is a summative question. The candidates are expected to answer the question by giving a summative evaluation of all the sources. The assumption is that some sources prove that Germany was to blame for the outbreak of World War I while others do not. Therefore, candidates were expected to be in a position to identify sources that support and those that do not support the two sides of argument. To reach at least 9 marks both sides of the argument should be discussed. Reference to the source is still important but candidates are expected to just simply write "as in Source A" or "as suggested by Source C" because the assumption is that all the sources have been interpreted in the previous questions.

Just like question 3 above, compared to the previous years, this part of the question was well done by most candidates across Centres. They scored good marks as most of them reached Level 4. Most candidates across Centres were able to analyse the individual sources as per the

requirements of the question. There were a few candidates who simply gave a description of the sources without linking it to the question. In some instances, some candidates paraphrased the sources, thus scoring low marks as they could only reach either level 1 or 2. Some gave general information on the reasons why the League failed or incidents where the League failed without attaching it to any source, which put them at Level 2 of the answer. Some candidates failed to reach a conclusion as summary of the sources based on the requirements of the question. Those candidates who attempted to reach a conclusion only summarised previous point (repetition) without evaluation.

Where some candidates failed to grasp the message of the source like in Source B and D, it had a ripple effect into this part of the question as they lacked the skills to transcend to higher levels. Just like with BGCSE, some desperate candidates who lacked historical information on the failure of the League of Nations resorted to re-writing the textual sources or paraphrasing or simple description of the sources. Summative evaluation of the sources is important to take candidates to the highest level, in order to score 10 marks.

### **PAPER 3: PROVIDER BASED ASSESSMENT**

#### **General Comments**

The component was being assessed for the first time being part of the requirements for the History Outcomes Based Education (OBE) syllabus. The report was produced by the candidates, following guidance as communicated in the Assessment Syllabus, with minimal guidance from the teachers. The guidance was in terms of the structure of the report and the key areas to be addressed as communicated in the marking criteria.

The performance by the candidates was fair. There were some issues that were limiting factors which contributed to the performance of the candidates. Some of the challenges that were observed were:

- Candidates coming up with their own topics even though they were provided with topics to choose from,
- Poor layout of the report despite the fact that guidance was provided on aspects to be covered by the report,
- Arguments that were one sided when developing or discussing the topic of their choice,
- Overreliance on Artificial Intelligence (AI), thus limiting credible sources of information that could be referenced.

#### **Topic**

The two questions were derived from Module 3 HISSL 3.2 in the teaching syllabus. Both questions are well covered by the syllabus, and they were both clear and accessible. Candidates were expected to choose from two questions, and the question should be adopted as it is without coming up with your own version of the question.

#### **Standardisation**

Most Centres did their standardisation thoroughly, and the standards were set in accordance with the demands of the questions and with the guidance of the provided scoring rubric. However, there were some Centres where it was evident that the work submitted was not subjected to the internal standardisation process. The candidates work was submitted as being from teaching groups with different marking standards applied for each group rather than Centre reports that have been subjected to the same marking standards. Most of the Centres had access to computers and could type the research projects and adhere to the set standards. A few Centres submitted handwritten research projects which made it difficult to adhere to the set standards. This is because it was a challenge to determine the font size and spacing as stipulated by the scoring rubric.

#### **Packaging and Submission**

Most Centres submitted their reports together with the Registers, Centre Order of Merit and Summary Mark Sheets as expected. However, there were some Centres who submitted incomplete documents and had to be followed up thereby delaying the conclusion of the moderation process. Some Centres did not capture the candidates scores (Teacher Mark) on the processing system.

### Comments on Individual Sections

#### (a) Layout

Most Candidates were able to write a table of contents and subheadings in their research project. Many candidates did not take particular care especially with capturing the topic as it appears in the question paper. In some Centres, candidates regarded questions as a theme from which they could formulate their own questions. There was also less adherence to font size, spacing and in some instances the number of words as stipulated in the question paper. Candidates are expected to have a title page with the names of the researcher and the title captured as it appears in the question paper. They are to use Times New Roman, font size 12 and spacing of 1.5. The report should have page numbering, and the subheadings should follow the table of contents.

#### (b) Introduction

Most of the candidates performed fairly in the introduction. The candidates were able to provide historical background for both topics. Most of the candidates could not provide focused aims to direct the scope of the research. This made it a challenge to fully address the demands of the question. The definition of key terms was mostly limited to the words in the question. Candidates should have focused aims in order to direct the scope of their research. The definition of key terms should be picked from the research question and the body of the essay.

#### (c) Body

It was fairly done. There was better understanding for Question 1. This was probably because the question focused the candidates to the socio-economic aspects and the time frame provided. Question 2 was the most misunderstood by candidates. Their discussions focused on the impact of mining on Botswana instead of Batswana as stipulated by the question. This relegated most of them to Band 2 because they could only provide partial answers. Even those that addressed the question could not bring their discussions on the tangible impact brought by mining. The other challenge that was observed from other Centres was that the candidates modified the questions, especially question 2 which made them to address the limited aspects of the question. The poor performance for question 1 was limited by lack of skill to develop claims fully. There was an observation that was made across all Centres on the use of Artificial Intelligence generated answers. Moderators observed similar responses from various Centres indicating that they came from the same source. This relegated the candidates to lower bands because they failed to develop the claims fully to meet the demands of the question. It was also clear that some candidates may have used information from academic papers which were related to the questions. The conclusion was drawn from the complicated language used and the presentation of some aspects that were not demanded by the project layout. There was limited referencing of sources in the body of the essay, for both primary and secondary. This shows that there was insufficient knowledge of use of sources and referencing them. The candidates should use both primary and secondary sources.

#### (d) Conclusion

The conclusion was fairly done. Most of the candidates were able to provide a summary of their research topic. Some candidates that had derailed from the topic in the body of the research could only partially address the research question leading to lower marks. Most of the candidates did not comment on the usefulness of the sources used in the research as required by the scoring rubric.



The conclusion should be clear, thoughtful, engaging and address the research topic. The candidates should comment on the usefulness of the sources used in the research.

**(e) Bibliography**

The bibliography was fairly done. Most of the candidates were able to write down a list of sources used in the research. Most of the candidates did not follow the Chicago referencing style consistently. Candidates should follow the Chicago referencing style and use at least 5 sources. They should use both primary and secondary sources.