

October 2006

Dear Head of History

Edexcel GCE History: Coursework arrangements for Specification Issue 5

The amended GCE History Specification Issue 5 is now in operation for first examination 2007 (AS and A2). I am writing to provide the following reminder for centres offering Coursework:

- **Edexcel designed coursework programmes**

We have recently updated the Edexcel designed coursework programmes for the new specification and introduced several new programmes which may be of interest to centres. The Coursework Programmes document can be found on the Edexcel website (www.edexcel.org.uk/history).

- **Coursework requirements Specification Issue 5**

You should already be aware that AO2 is no longer assessed in Units 3 and 5. AO1 is assessed as a single task marked out of a total of 60 marks. All coursework submitted in Summer 2007 (year 12 and 13) must therefore consist of a single task worth 60 marks. Edexcel will not make any allowance for centres submitting coursework that does not meet these requirements in Summer 2007. Should any centre submit 'old style' coursework in Summer 2007 (ie including a part (a) task assessing AO2) Edexcel will only consider the part (b) response assessing AO1 and moderate the work accordingly. Centres that have produced work for submission in Summer 2007 using the requirements of the 'old specification' (Issue 4) are therefore advised to rewrite their coursework to the new specification (Issue 5) requirements except in the following circumstances:

- **Centres that completed coursework before Summer 2006 to the 'old specification' requirements but did not submit the work for moderation in Summer 2006**

We have recently been made aware of a small number of centres that follow a two year terminal examination course that completed the coursework before Summer 2006 to the old specification requirements but intended to submit the work for moderation in Summer 2007. These centres will be permitted to submit coursework for moderation in January 2007 since the work was completed at a time when Specification Issue 4 was still in operation. This is a special arrangement for January 2007 only and you must formally notify the Assessment Leader immediately, in writing, if your centre is affected by these circumstances. Edexcel will then write to you to confirm details of how to enter. This special arrangement is only available to centres that have completed coursework to the old specification requirements before Summer 2006 but did not submit the work for moderation in Summer 2006.

- **Re-sitting coursework units**

Students who wish to re-sit a coursework unit may not simply re-work or re-draft their original assignment but must write to a new question. The new question may address the same or a different area of the coursework programme (Specification Issue 5 page 43). Students who sat coursework in Summer 2006 and wish to re-sit in Summer 2007 must therefore write to a new question in the style of the new specification ie a single task worth 60 marks.

- **Changes to the approval process for centre designed coursework**

For Specification Issue 5 there is a one-stage approval process for centre designed coursework teaching programmes, carried out by the Principal Moderator. Centres no longer need to seek approval for coursework assignment tasks and therefore we have discontinued the regional consultancy service. This change has been made possible because the removal of the sources from the coursework assignment and the application of a generic mark scheme has simplified the process of designing coursework assignments.

Teachers who already have approval for existing coursework programmes (old specification Issue 4) and have not changed their unit options do not need to seek re-approval for those programmes. Teachers will, however, need to amend their coursework assignments to meet the new requirements by removing the sources and the (a) question. See pages 38-39 of the Specification Issue 5 for more details on coursework programme approval. It is also now possible to apply electronically for approval of a centre-designed coursework programme via the Edexcel website (www.edexcel.org.uk/history). Additional guidance on the design of coursework programmes can be found in the new Coursework and Teachers' Guide.

- **New Coursework and Teachers' Guide**

A new version of the Coursework and Teachers' Guide (Issue 4, March 2006) was recently sent to all centres and a copy can be found on the Edexcel website at www.edexcel.org.uk/history. This document contains important information relating to both coursework and examined options and all centres must ensure they are using the up-to-date version.

- **Coursework Word limits**

It is the centre's responsibility to inform students that there is no tolerance on the given word limits and that work submitted for examination which exceeds, by any amount, the upper end of these limits (2,750 words for Unit 3 and 3,000 words for Unit 5) will be penalised via the mark scheme. All assignments must state precisely and accurately the number of words at the end of the assignment and on the Individual Candidate Authentication Sheet. Work that exceeds the word limit should be returned to students for editing to the required length. The generic mark scheme published in Specification Issue 5 details, as part of each level descriptor, what action teacher-examiners have to take when marking over-long work.

If you require any further information you can email me at mark.battye@edexcel.org.uk or telephone 0870 240 9800.

Yours sincerely



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