

Commentary on candidate evidence

Candidate 1

The candidate evidence has achieved the following marks for each element of the coursework assessment task.

Dissertation title: “War was a locomotive of social change.” To what extent is this true of the Second World War in Britain?

Structure (overall structure, introduction and conclusion)

The candidate was awarded **credit in the 45-50 mark range** because:

Introduction

There is a relevant introduction with main interpretations outlined. It also includes an acknowledgement of relevant historians, an outline of the major factors to be addressed and a suggested line of argument.

Overall structure

There is a sound structure which supports the logical progression of the argument in which sections are demarcated into specific content based chapters which relate to relevant issues and sub-issues.

Conclusion

A well written, compelling conclusion which makes a definitive judgement on the question based upon synthesis and the evaluation of the core concepts.

Thoroughness/ relevance of information and approach

The candidate was awarded **credit in the 45-50 mark range** because the dissertation demonstrates a wide range of serious reading and demonstrates a considerable width and depth of knowledge.

Quality paragraphs which feature well worked and insightful evidence feature throughout the dissertation. Evidence is clearly linked to analysis, for example when analysing the effects of the Blitz on the civilian population:

“The myth of the Blitz” conjures images of “gallant Cockneys joking at adversity.” Some historians follow Calder’s viewpoint: myths are founded in truths. A belief that “bombs do not discriminate” supposedly created national cohesion. Large shelters like Tilbury meant strangers of mixed class, gender, and ethnicity came together in unarguably traumatic times, “an enormous social achievement,” acting as a locomotive of social change through raising consciousness about the deprivation of the poorer in society, urging people to demand reforms from authorities.’

Analysis, evaluation and line of argument

The candidate was awarded **credit in the 45-50 mark range** because throughout the dissertation there was a firm grasp of the evaluative aims of the question and a very assured and consistent control of the argument.

A line of argument is augmented effectively by the use of sub-conclusions, which are effective in linking argument to evaluation, for example in concluding the candidate's first chapter focused on the argument surrounding the breaking down of class barriers in wartime Britain:

'Social habits and behaviour did change things under the unusual war circumstances. The Blitz perhaps united people under a common cause, but to argue that social change was driven because of the new understanding of the plight of those bombed is an overstatement. It can be strongly argued that class awareness, however was heightened. Through this, war was able to accelerate social changes made by a government who could no longer ignore obvious inequalities.'

Historical sources/interpretations

The candidate was awarded **credit in the 40-44 mark range** because the dissertation consistently demonstrates a sound knowledge and understanding of historians' interpretations and arguments which enhances the evidence used particularly in relation to both analysis and interpretation of context. For example, when seeking to highlight the significance of women working during the Second World War:

'Equal pay remained an issue for women. Hylton believes "the government itself had no intention of interfering with the time-honoured practice of sex discrimination in the workplace.'

An extensive bibliography is backed up by numerous examples of accurate historiography and appropriate footnotes.

The candidate ensures reference is made to primary source material by quoting a part of a speech made by the Labour leader Clement Attlee:

'In 1940, Attlee said, "I am quite certain that the world that must emerge from this war must be a world attuned to our ideals.'