

Commentary on candidate evidence

Candidate 1 – Part A: Historical Issues

The evidence for this candidate was placed within the following mark ranges for each question of this course assessment component.

Question 21: To what extent do the popes of the High Renaissance deserve a reputation for worldliness?

The overall mark awarded was in the 23-25 range.

It should be noted that the two main criteria in assessing an Advanced Higher History essay are thoroughness/relevance of information and approach *and* analysis/evaluation and line of argument.

Structure

The introduction to the essay is relevant, setting the High Renaissance Papacy in its historical context and identifying the main line of argument relating to the issue of worldliness. The introduction meets the criteria for the range 18-19 marks.

The structure of the essay is well defined throughout and displays a confident grasp of the demands of the question. The candidate identifies four key ways in which the characteristics of High Renaissance Popes can potentially be considered worldly (their desire for temporal power, love of magnificence, militancy and dynastic ambition). In each instance due consideration is given to alternative interpretations. The structure meets the criteria for the range **20-22 marks**.

The conclusion is weaker than the rest of the essay but does briefly evaluate the key issues to reach an overall judgement about the view identified in the question. The conclusion meets the criteria for the range **18-19 marks**.

Thoroughness/relevance of information and approach

The treatment of the issue demonstrates a considerable width and depth of knowledge. This very well informed answer makes use of a wide range of solid historical evidence, which is always clearly linked to points of analysis and evaluation. Minor factual errors (Adrian IV is mentioned, where it should be Adrian VI) can be overlooked where the overall quality is of a high standard. The content is all highly relevant: the candidate never loses sight of the issue raised by the question. This meets the criteria for **23-25 marks**.

Analysis, evaluation and line of argument

The issues are presented in a fluent and insightful way, with detailed and effective analysis of each of the identified ways in which High Renaissance Popes might be considered worldly. The line of argument is advanced consistently and each section concludes with an effective evaluation of the evidence used. There are instances where the candidate goes beyond the most obvious implications of the question: for instance, Julius II's temporal ambitions are evaluated in the light of Valla's proof, in the previous century, that the Donation of Constantine was a forgery. This meets the criteria for the **23-25 mark range**.

Historical sources and interpretations

Historians (JR Hale, Hole and John Julius Norwich – mistakenly given as John Julius Nicholas) are largely used to illustrate the main line of argument. However, good use is also made of references to Luther, Erasmus and Guicciardini as contemporary commentaries on the worldliness of the Papacy. This meets the criteria for the **20-22 mark range**.

Candidate 1 – Part B: Historical Sources

The evidence for this candidate was placed within the following mark ranges for each question of this course assessment component.

Question 22: How much do Sources A and B reveal about differing interpretations of the influence of Cosimo il Vecchio on the governing of Florence?

The candidate was awarded **16 marks** because all of the criteria for this question were met as follows:

The candidate was awarded 6 marks for Interpretation, 8 marks for wider contextual development, including 1 mark for provenance, and 2 marks for referring to historical interpretations.

Interpretation

The candidate was awarded **6 marks** (the maximum available) because they correctly identify six relevant points (3 from each source) and then explain the significance of each statement, ie 'The first way in which Source A shows the influence of Cosimo on the governing of Florence is when it highlights that he was granted a great measure of respect. This is shown by "on whom our Senate bestowed the title Father of His Country"'. The candidate then continues by referring to additional relevant recalled information and gains a wider contextual development, by stating 'because he was granted such respect, the Signoria of Florence ... often asked his advice, and thus Cosimo played an important role in foreign policy'. The candidate achieves a further wider contextual development point by commenting that Cosimo was often referred to as a 'Prince in all but name and state' and that 'he took Head of State 3 times'.

Note: The candidate cannot be awarded further wider contextual development marks for additional contextual information relating to a single interpretation point. (There is a maximum of 2 per interpretation point.) However as they have correctly referred to a relevant historian's viewpoint, a mark could have been awarded for 'historical interpretations'.

This candidate chooses to enumerate the points selected from the two sources (the first view, the second view, the third view). This is not required though it may help the individual candidate.

A further example of this candidate achieving an interpretation mark, followed by a wider contextual development refers this time to Source B: 'The first way in which the source shows the influence of Cosimo when it highlights that he had a very strong impact on government in Florence. This is shown by 'Cosimo's influence in the governing of Florence was so dominant' (1 interpretation mark). 'This is because, when it mattered Cosimo could effectively ensure that the top places in government were filled by Medici supporters. This was done with the scrutiny, which was a process in which people sorted through election bags and took out names of the dead and added new members. Cosimo could make this

process last years and it was often his friends who were carrying out the scrutiny. To ensure that Medici supports were elected into government each time Cosimo also ensured that election were carried out 'a mano' during the scrutiny'. (1 wider contextual development mark for explaining Cosimo's dominance by referring to knowledge relating to his manipulation of the Florentine constitution).

Wider contextual development

The candidate was awarded **8 marks** (the maximum number of wider contextual development marks available in the two source question). Here the candidate, in fact, makes nine relevant points as well as a relevant provenance point, which can be included in wider contextual development in the two source question. Early in the answer the candidate states that Marsilio Ficino (the author of Source A) was employed by Cosimo de Medici towards the end of his life: 'He was commissioned most famously to translate all the works of Plato into Latin, making them accessible to all scholars'. (1 provenance mark, included in wider contextual development).

Historical interpretations

The candidate was awarded **2 marks** for including accurate references to relevant historical interpretations: 'According to Gene Brucker, although Medici authority in Florence increased, the regime was never absolute and the Republic was not turned into an autocratic despotism' and 'Cosimo was one of the greatest patrons of the Renaissance and according to Margaret King, the Medici dominated the city culturally, as well as politically'.

Although the candidate does attempt to answer the question at the end of the answer by stating 'Overall both sources show that Cosimo was a powerful leader and so don't reveal much about differing interpretations of his governing' this is not a mandatory requirement of the two source question and there are no marks allocated to this aspect of the question.