Please read in conjunction with the information provided in the introductory section above.

HISTORY TEST SPECIFICATION

1 AIMS

The AEA in history should encourage students to:

- effectively communicate historical knowledge and understanding;
- demonstrate in depth their understanding of historical terms and concepts;
- evaluate the significance of events, individuals, issues and societies in history;
- demonstrate a critical understanding of the nature of historical evidence and the methods used by historians in analysis and evaluation;
- demonstrate in-depth understanding of how the past has been interpreted and represented;
- demonstrate critical understanding of the nature of historical study, for example, that history is concerned with judgements based on available evidence and that historical judgements may be provisional;
- sustain their interest in and enthusiasm for history.

2 CONTENT

Knowledge, Understanding and Skills

Candidates will be required to demonstrate understanding of:

- significant events, individuals and/or issues;
- a range of historical perspectives, for example cultural, economic, political and social;
- the synoptic nature of historical study.

Knowledge and Understanding

Candidates should be required to:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of historical themes, topics and periods;
- assess the significance in their historical context of events, individuals, ideas, attitudes and/or beliefs and the ways in which they influenced behaviour and action;
- demonstrate their understanding of how topics, individuals, issues and/or themes have been interpreted and represented;
- demonstrate their understanding of the nature of historical study, for example, that history is concerned with judgements based on available evidence and that historical judgements may be provisional;

- demonstrate their understanding of key historical terms and concepts;
- demonstrate breadth of historical knowledge and understanding by making links and drawing comparisons.

Skills

Candidates should be required to:

- use a range of historical concepts and terms in appropriate ways, for example in presenting a case, argument or account;
- communicate clear, concise and logical arguments substantiated by relevant evidence;
- critically assess specific historical questions, problems or issues;
- demonstrate their ability to use sources of information to explain, analyse and synthesise and to make judgements.

3 ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE

The AEA in history will assess candidates' abilities to apply and communicate effectively their understanding of history using the skills of critical analysis, evaluation, creativity and synthesis.

4 SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT

Supervision and duration of assessment
The model of external assessment to be trialled in history is a three hour, written examination under controlled conditions. The examination will consist of:
one question based on extract(s) taken, for example, from a historian writing about the nature of history and historical study (contributing to two thirds of the total marks). The question would be broken down into components requiring candidates, for example, to

- summarise a/the key idea(s);
- use historical knowledge to support or challenge a/the key idea(s);
- demonstrate understanding of a phrase or concept by exemplification in an historical context;
- develop in extended prose a response to the main thesis of the author.
- one essay question (from a choice of four). This will assess candidates' ability to use their knowledge and understanding of the period(s) of history they have studied in answering a generic question relating to a concept, issue or theme (contributing to one third of the total marks);

5 PERFORMANCE LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

Distinction
Candidates:

- recall, select and deploy a range of relevant and detailed historical knowledge. They respond critically to a wide range of issues, presenting the discussion in a thorough and sophisticated analytical style. Accurate and comprehensive understanding of key terms and concepts is demonstrated in the explanations and conclusions drawn and placed in appropriate historical contexts;
- demonstrate a critical awareness of a range of differing perspectives on the past, making clear connections, comparisons and contrasts and placing them in context;
- evaluate and synthesise information, ideas and attitudes from the past, placing them in context and demonstrating confidence in moving between generalisation and detailed discussion. They integrate the historical materials into imaginative, coherent and convincing arguments and explanations;

- demonstrate clear understanding of how historical events, topics and personalities have been interpreted, making well supported and balanced judgements about these interpretations which are communicated with a consistently high level of clarity and precision.

Merit
Candidates:

- recall, select and deploy a range of relevant and detailed historical knowledge. They respond critically to the main issues, presenting the discussion in a thorough and analytical style. Accurate and comprehensive understanding of key terms and concepts is demonstrated in the explanations and conclusions drawn and placed in appropriate historical contexts;

- demonstrate awareness of a range of differing perspectives on the past, making connections, comparisons and contrasts and placing them in context;

- evaluate and synthesise information, ideas and attitudes from the past, placing them in context and integrating them effectively into coherent arguments and explanations;

- demonstrate clear understanding of how historical events, topics and personalities have been interpreted, making well supported and balanced judgements about these interpretations which are communicated with clarity and precision.