

EXAMINERS' REPORT

AM HISTORY

FIRST SESSION 2018



**L-Università
ta' Malta**

**MATSEC
Examinations Board**

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Statistical Information

GRADE	A	B	C	D	E	F	ABS	TOTAL
NUMBER	2	13	31	16	8	8	13	91
% OF TOTAL	2.2	14.3	34.1	17.6	8.8	8.8	14.3	100

General comments

The exam consists of three papers of three hours each, Paper 1: Maltese History, Paper 2: European and International History, and Paper 3: Mediterranean History. Each paper carries 33% of the total marks of the examination. Each paper consists of two essay questions and one document-based question. All questions carry equal weighting. The Board noted positive signs of individual effort, particularly in the grade A to C bracket. This was observed both in essay questions and in text-based exercises. On the other hand, as noted in past sessions, several shortcomings were evident in the skills required in essay writing as well as in document analysis in the lower range of grades. Moreover, a limited grasp of factual knowledge was observed in the latter range. The Board would like to emphasize individual note taking skills and good reading practices, as skills which should complement the class discussion of syllabus topics.

Paper 1 Maltese History

Question 1 tested knowledge on nineteenth-century Maltese history. Question 1 (c) was attempted by around half the candidates and question 1 (b) was the least popular.

Question 1 (a) required candidates to identify the main constitutional demands made by the Maltese representatives in the nineteenth century, and to discuss the extent to which those demands were granted by the British in 1887. The majority of students showed a good grasp of the facts.

Question 1 (b) tested knowledge of ecclesiastical involvement in Maltese politics in the period from 1800 to 1921. The majority of answers showed good factual knowledge of the subject.

As noted, the most popular question was 1 (c), which required candidates to discuss a statement on Maltese economic development and dependence on the island's fortress role in the nineteenth century. Most students agreed with the statement, and a good number of answers showed a good grasp of the factual framework of the subject.

Question 2 tested knowledge of twentieth-century Maltese history. Question 2 (b) was attempted by the majority of students, with question 2 (a) attracting slightly more respondents than 2 (c).

Question 2 (a) asked students to compare and contrast the reasons behind the suspension of the 1921 and 1947 constitutions by the British authorities. The majority of candidates showed a relatively good grasp of the facts, but it was clear from a significant number of scripts that the 'compare and contrast' command term proved to be challenging.

Question 2 (b), which was the most popular question, asked how and why the politico-religious relations in Malta in 1930 and 1962 were so prominent. Answers were generally better in answering how, than suggesting the reasons why this was the case.

Question 2 (c) tested knowledge of the social and economic contribution made by Self-Government administrations. The candidates who answered this question showed a relatively good grasp of the facts.

Question 3 offered a choice between two text-based questions.

Question 3 (a) was attempted by most candidates. It tested knowledge of Maltese political development and constitutional demands with an extract from the famous Declaration of Rights of 1802. Candidates generally showed they understood the text well. Question (i) which requested a brief account of events, was answered well by a good number of candidates. Similarly, question (ii) on the circumstances leading the Maltese to issue this Declaration, was answered relatively well. Question (iv), which asked about other powers who could claim the right to govern Malta, proved challenging to several students. Question (v), on the extent to which the British observed the terms laid down in the Declaration, with reference to the nineteenth century, was answered relatively well, although some candidates did not consider the last part of the question.

Question 3 (b), based on an extract from the notes of the Reverend Douglas about Malta in 1843, tested knowledge of the Maltese economy and migration in the nineteenth century. Few candidates attempted this question. Question (i) required candidates to write the main features of the Maltese economy in the early British period, while question (ii) asked them to explain the author's comment on Malta's overpopulation. Some of the answers showed good knowledge of the facts. Question (iii) asked candidates to explain the significance of the author's reference to the Maltese language within this context, while question (iv) tested knowledge of Maltese migration around the Mediterranean. Both questions were answered relatively well. Question (v), which asked students to write about one case study of Maltese migration they had studied, proved challenging in some cases.

Paper 2 European and International History

Question 1 offered a choice of three questions, testing knowledge of European history to 1918. Half the candidates attempted question 1 (b), while question 1 (c) was the least popular.

Question 1 (a) tested knowledge on the Congress of Vienna. The majority of candidates answering this question showed a good grasp of the chronology and were able to discuss the given statement well.

Question 1 (b), on the main causes of World War I, was the most popular choice. A significant number of candidates showed a good preparation in this topic.

Question 1 (c), on the Industrial Revolution in France and Germany, was the least popular choice. Several candidates who attempted this question showed a good grasp of the facts and were able to discuss the given statement well.

Question 2 offered a choice of three questions, testing knowledge of twentieth-century European history. Question 2 (b) was answered by more than half the candidates, followed by 2 (a). The least popular choice was 2 (c).

Question 2 (a) tested knowledge of World War II and the role of Germany in seeking European dominance. The majority of students answering this question showed a good factual understanding, but in some cases the given statement was not taken into consideration.

Question 2 (b) tested knowledge on Cold War Europe and the division of Germany. This was by far the most popular question, and the majority of students attempting it showed a good basic knowledge of the facts and chronology.

Question 2 (c) tested knowledge on post-World War II recovery in Europe. A small number of candidates attempted this question.

Question 3 offered a choice between two text-based questions.

Question 3 (a) was attempted by a small majority of students. It tested knowledge of the French Revolution of 1830, based on an extract from a speech by Francois Guizot. Question (i) required candidates to write a brief account of the events of 1830 in France. Several students performed well. Question (ii) tested knowledge on the French empire, as cited in the text. Question (iii) presented a selection of terms for explanation and elaboration. The majority of candidates were able to answer question (iv), on the features of the constitutional monarchy created in 1830, relatively well. A number of students found question (v), challenging. This question tackled the extent to which the pledge of 'order and liberty', made in 1830, was attained.

Question 3 (b) tested knowledge on the rise of Britain as an industrial power in the first half of the nineteenth century, with an extract from the book by Andrew Ure, published in 1835. Question (i) required an explanation of Britain's rise as an industrial power. The majority of candidates were also able to answer question (ii) well, and to give good examples of the 'evils' created by the Industrial Revolution. Some candidates stopped short of explaining their own opinion in favour or against the author's position on the benefits of British manufacturing (iii). The majority of students showed good preparation in answering (iv), on the main technological innovations of Britain's industrialization, and (v), which required familiarity with at least one continental example of the industrial phenomenon.

Paper 3 Mediterranean History

Question 1 offered a choice of three questions, testing knowledge of modern Mediterranean history up to the outbreak of World War I. The most popular question was 1 (a), chosen by more than half the candidates, followed by 1 (b).

Question 1 (a) tested knowledge of the Continental System instated by Napoleon I. The majority of candidates answering this question showed a fairly good grasp of the facts. Several candidates did not discuss the quotation presented in the question.

Question 1 (b), on the Treaty of Berlin of 1878, was answered in a fairly satisfactory manner, but several answers did not address properly the second part of the question on the main consequences.

Few candidates attempted question 1 (c), on the significance of the Moroccan crises in the early twentieth century.

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Question 2 offered a choice of three questions, testing knowledge of the history of the Mediterranean in the twentieth-century. Questions 2 (b) and 2 (c) were chosen by the majority of candidates, in almost equal numbers.

Question 2 (a) tested knowledge of Fascist Italy and the balance of power in the Mediterranean. Several answers showed a good familiarity with Fascist Italy but did not discuss properly the way in which it affected the balance of power in the Mediterranean.

Question 2 (b) tested knowledge on the process of decolonization in the case of Britain's Mediterranean colonies. Several candidates showed a fairly good grasp of the facts but in some cases wrote descriptive answers without answering the full requirements of the question.

Question 2 (c) enquired about the factors shaping the Palestinian Question from the establishment of the state of Israel. The general trend was for candidates to write mainly a chronological narrative of the Arab-Israeli wars, instead of also discussing the other factors which shaped the Palestinian question, such as nationalism, displacement and diaspora, Palestinian leadership, Superpower rivalry, and so on.

Question 3 offered a choice between two text-based questions. Question 3 (b) was the more popular choice of the two.

Question 3 (a) provided an extract from the Treaty of Paris of 1856, testing knowledge on the Crimean War and the role of the great powers. Question (i) asked candidates to write an account of the main causes of the war. A good number of students showed a fairly good familiarity with the causes of the conflict. In the case of question (ii) which tackled the main characteristics of the war, some of the answers were vague. The quotation from the text in question (iii) was explained well by several candidates. Question (iv) on the role of the Kingdom of Sardinia proved challenging for a number of candidates. Question (v) required knowledge of the great powers' rivalry after the Crimean conflict.

Question 3 (b) was based on an extract from the address of Samuel Christian to the Maltese Chamber of Commerce in March 1870. Question (i) asked candidates to write a brief historical account of the construction of the Suez Canal, and question (ii) asked for comments on the importance of this event in Mediterranean history. Several students showed a good familiarity with the facts and timeline. Question (iii) required a brief discussion of the main consequences in Maltese history. A few of the answers were rather vague. Question (iv) on Britain's interests in linking the Mediterranean to Asian trade was an opportunity to comment on Britain's leading role in world trade as an industrial power, and the significance of the imperial route to India. Question (v) asked candidates to write about the commercial advantages provided by Malta in the nineteenth century. A number of answers rightly commented on the trading advantages by drawing a broad picture of Malta's strategic location and harbours, and the way these were exploited particularly during times of war.

Chairperson
Examiners' Panel 2018