



Mark Scheme

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel
In GCE History (9HI0/33)
Advanced

Paper 3: Themes in breadth with aspects in depth
Option 33: The witch craze in Britain, Europe and North America, c1580–c1750

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Generic Level Descriptors: Section A

Target: AO2: Analyse and evaluate appropriate source material, primary and/or contemporary to the period, within its historical context.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
1	1–3	• Demonstrates surface level comprehension of the source material without analysis, selecting some material relevant to the question, but in the form of direct quotations or paraphrases. • Some relevant contextual knowledge is included, with limited linkage to the source material. • Evaluation of the source material is assertive with little or no supporting evidence. Concepts of reliability or utility may be addressed, but by making stereotypical judgements.
2	4–7	• Demonstrates some understanding and attempts analysis of the source material by selecting and summarising information and making undeveloped inferences relevant to the question. • Contextual knowledge is added to information from the source material to expand, confirm or challenge matters of detail. • Evaluation of the source material is related to the specified enquiry but with limited support for judgement. Concepts of reliability or utility are addressed mainly by noting aspects of source provenance and judgements may be based on questionable assumptions.
3	8–12	• Demonstrates understanding of the source material and shows some analysis by selecting key points relevant to the question, explaining their meaning and selecting material to support valid inferences. • Deploys knowledge of the historical context to explain or support inferences as well as to expand, confirm or challenge matters of detail. • Evaluation of the source material is related to the specified enquiry and explanation of utility takes into account relevant considerations such as nature or purpose of the source material or the position of the author. Judgements are based on valid criteria but with limited justification.
4	13–16	• Analyses the source material, interrogating the evidence to make reasoned inferences and to show a range of ways the material can be used, for example by distinguishing between information and claim or opinion, although treatment of the two enquiries may be uneven. • Deploys knowledge of the historical context to illuminate and/or discuss the limitations of what can be gained from the content of the source material, displaying some understanding of the need to interpret source material in the context of the values and concerns of the society from which it is drawn. • Evaluation of the source material uses valid criteria which are justified and applied, although some of the evaluation may be weakly substantiated. Evaluation takes into account the weight the evidence will bear as part of coming to a judgement.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
5	17–20	• Interrogates the evidence of the source in relation to both enquiries with confidence and discrimination, making reasoned inferences and showing a range of ways the material can be used, for example by distinguishing between information and claim or opinion. • Deploys knowledge of the historical context to illuminate and/ or discuss the limitations of what can be gained from the content of the source material, displaying secure understanding of the need to interpret source material in the context of the values and concerns of the society from which it is drawn. • Evaluation of the source material uses valid criteria which are justified and fully applied. Evaluation takes into account the weight the evidence will bear as part of coming to a judgement and, where appropriate, distinguishes between the degree of certainty with which aspects of it can be used as the basis for claims.

Sections B and C

Target: AO1: Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
1	1–3	• Simple or generalised statements are made about the topic. • Some accurate and relevant knowledge is included, but it lacks range and depth and does not directly address the question. • The overall judgement is missing or asserted. • There is little, if any, evidence of attempts to structure the answer, and the answer overall lacks coherence and precision.
2	4–7	• There is limited analysis of some key features of the period relevant to the question, but descriptive passages are included that are not clearly shown to relate to the focus of the question. • Mostly accurate and relevant knowledge is included, but lacks range or depth and has only implicit links to the demands and conceptual focus of the question. • An overall judgement is given but with limited substantiation and the criteria for judgement are left implicit. • The answer shows some attempts at organisation, but most of the answer is lacking in coherence, clarity and precision.
3	8–12	• There is some analysis of, and attempt to explain links between, the relevant key features of the period and the question, although descriptive passages may be included. • Mostly accurate and relevant knowledge is included to demonstrate some understanding of the demands and conceptual focus of the question, but material lacks range or depth. • Attempts are made to establish criteria for judgement and to relate the overall judgement to them, although with weak substantiation. • The answer shows some organisation. The general trend of the argument is clear, but parts of it lack logic, coherence and precision.
4	13–16	• Key issues relevant to the question are explored by an analysis of the relationships between key features of the period, although treatment of issues may be uneven. • Sufficient knowledge is deployed to demonstrate understanding of the demands and conceptual focus of the question and to meet most of its demands. • Valid criteria by which the question can be judged are established and applied in the process of coming to a judgement. Although some of the evaluations may be only partly substantiated, the overall judgement is supported. • The answer is generally well organised. The argument is logical and is communicated with clarity, although in a few places it may lack coherence and precision.
5	17–20	• Key issues relevant to the question are explored by a sustained analysis of the relationships between key features of the period. • Sufficient knowledge is deployed to demonstrate understanding of the demands and conceptual focus of the question, and to respond fully to its demands. • Valid criteria by which the question can be judged are established and applied and their relative significance evaluated in the process of reaching and substantiating the overall judgement. • The answer is well organised. The argument is logical and coherent throughout and is communicated with clarity and precision.

Section A: Indicative Content

Question	Indicative content
1	Answers will be credited according to candidates' deployment of material in relation to the qualities outlined in the generic mark scheme. The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all the material which is indicated as relevant. Other relevant material not suggested below must also be credited. Candidates must analyse the source to consider its value for an enquiry into revealing how accusations of witchcraft spread in Bamberg and the process of securing a confession there. Junius is not named in the specification, but candidates can be expected to know about the social groups affected by the witch hunts and be aware of the context. - The following points could be made about the authorship, nature or purpose of the source and applied to ascribe value to information and inferences: - The minutes are dated 1628, towards the end of the Bamberg witch trials, when the extent of the witch hunt was apparent - The minutes are intended to be an accurate detailing of events - The minutes are an official document, presented at the trial, and therefore purport to be objective. - The value could be identified in terms of the following points of information from the source, and the inferences which could be drawn and supported from the source: How accusations of witchcraft spread: - The source implies that Junius had an awareness of the nature of beliefs in witches and how the process worked. He also had an awareness of how accusations were spread ('challenge... been seen at a witch-sabbath.') - It shows that Junius was confronted by other members of the community and that this added weight to the accusations made against him ('confronted by the Bishop's Vice Chancellor, Doctor Haan') - It claims that his accomplices had named him in their confessions and, in this way, the belief spread that witches did not act alone ('a witch-gathering') - It suggests that once Junius had confessed, it was expected that he would name others, and he does so ('and many others'), enabling the number of accusations made to spread. The process of securing confessions: - The source shows that the process against Junius lasted from the end of June to August, and implies that the length of this process is what secured a confession - It shows that at the start of the process, torture was not used, but if the accused failed to confess, then torture was used to persuade the accused to confess ('encouraged to confess... then thumb screws were applied.') - It claims that a witch's mark was found on Junius, offering proof that he was a witch ('blueish mark...felt no pain') - It implies that eventually Junius was forced, or bullied, into making a confession ('urgent persuasions... strongly encouraged to confess'). 3. Knowledge of historical context should be deployed to support and develop inferences and to confirm the value of the source in revealing how accusations of witchcraft spread in Bamberg and the process of securing a confession there. Relevant points may include:

	• The complete judicial control that the Prince-Bishops had, increased the levels of persecution in these areas • Unusually, and significantly, a large number of the victims were rich and from the upper elite of the state, e.g. John Junius, the Mayor of Bamberg • It was a period of massive dislocation due to the Thirty Years War - this reduced Imperial and Church controls over the Prince-Bishop • The area had only recently been reconverted to Roman Catholicism and dissent, and all heresies, were particularly suspect, and conformity was at a premium.
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Section B: Indicative content

Question	Indicative content
22	Answers will be credited according to candidates' deployment of material in relation to the qualities outlined in the generic mark scheme. The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all the material which is indicated as relevant. Candidates are expected to reach a judgement on how significant the Earl of Bothwell was to the spread of the Scottish witch hunts. Arguments and evidence that demonstrate the significance of the Earl of Bothwell to the spread of the Scottish witch hunts should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include: • The high status of the Earl of Bothwell and his familial connection to James as his first cousin, meant that if he was a witch then the conspiracy must have been widespread across Scotland, necessitating an expansion of the hunts • There was a strong political aspect to the accusations made against Bothwell, reflecting James' insecure hold on the throne and James' fear was exploited by those accused of witchcraft in North Berwick • The royal proclamation of 1591, which accused Bothwell of being in league with the Devil, led to his supporters being arrested and imprisoned, increasing the number of people in Scotland accused of witchcraft • Bothwell featured in an illustration within the pamphlet <i>Newes from Scotland</i> (1591), which confirmed contemporary understanding of witchcraft and the most effective methods for hunting witches • In 1595, witches were sent to Edinburgh for trial, from Caithness, accused of associating with Bothwell, demonstrating the impact of the accusations against Bothwell on the wider Scottish witch hunts. Arguments and evidence that factors other than the Earl of Bothwell were significant to the spread of the Scottish witch hunts, should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include: • James VI's own enthusiasm for witch hunting, with the examination of Agnes Sampson and culminating in the publication of <i>Daemonologie</i> in 1597, created a climate where witch hunting flourished • The lack of central control and the limited number of royal agents throughout Scotland enabled a witch panic to spread more quickly across the country • Aspects of the Scottish legal system, for example majority verdicts, made hunts easier and convictions more likely • There were no instructions from central government on how to carry out the witch hunts and reports back to the Privy Council were limited, which allowed the number of trials to expand unchecked • James established royal commissions into witchhunting and recommended the more extensive use of torture, which enabled accusations of witchcraft to increase. Other relevant material must be credited.

Question	Indicative content
3	Answers will be credited according to candidates' deployment of material in relation to the qualities outlined in the generic mark scheme. The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all the material which is indicated as relevant. Candidates are expected to reach a judgement on the suggestion that the influence of Cotton Mather's father, Increase Mather, was the main reason for the ending of the Salem witch hunt. Arguments and evidence that the influence of Cotton Mather's father, Increase Mather, was the main reason for the ending of the Salem witch hunt should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include: • Increase Mather returned from England, having secured the appointment, by the crown, of Phips as governor. This reinstatement of central authority helped bring the witch trials to an end • Reverend Increase Mather was significant with his sermons demanding caution in making accusations, preaching that inhabitants should focus on their own shortcomings, not those of their neighbours • Increase Mather signed <i>The return of several ministers</i>, written by his son Cotton Mather, which urged caution in making accusations of witchcraft • <i>Cases of conscience</i>, written by Increase Mather, reiterated his distrust of spectral evidence and the concept of possession • Increase Mather's role as president of Harvard University, and father of Cotton Mather, meant he was a well-respected member of the community, and someone whose views were respected in the community. Arguments and evidence that challenge the proposition should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include: • Doubts grew over the quality of evidence given in court, particularly over 'spectral evidence', which was considered to be not practical enough to prove someone was a witch • It was Governor Phips who dissolved the Court of Oyer and Terminer replacing it with a Superior Court of Judicature, which did not allow 'spectral evidence' that had been used against most of those previously accused • Witch hunting was not common in New England and the extent of these witch trials was unusual. This meant that there were external pressures that helped bring the trials to an end • The ban of witchcraft books, which had had an influence both on the nature of accusations and of proceedings at the trial, reduced the number of accusations and helped to bring the trials to an end • Many people stopped hunting for witches owing to the extent of the trials and the loss of friends and family. Other relevant material must be credited.

Section C: Indicative content

Question	Indicative content
4	Answers will be credited according to candidates' deployment of material in relation to the qualities outlined in the generic mark scheme. The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all the material which is indicated as relevant. Candidates are expected to reach a judgement on how far the publication of John Webster's <i>The Displaying of Supposed Witchcraft</i> (1677) had the most significant impact on changing attitudes to witchcraft in Britain in the years c1580-c1710. Arguments and evidence that the publication of John Webster's <i>The Displaying of Supposed Witchcraft</i> (1677) had the most significant impact on changing attitudes to witchcraft in Britain in the years c1580-c1710 should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include: • Webster developed Thomas Ady's ideas that beliefs not found in the Bible should be rejected; this increased the sense of scepticism surrounding beliefs in magic and witchcraft • Webster did not suggest that witches did not exist but rather that they were not capable of commanding supernatural powers. He was able to persuade a wider portion of the population about the limitations of acts of witchcraft • Webster critiqued cases where accusations of witchcraft had been made, attributing acts of harm to natural causes or to deception, thereby undermining beliefs in magic and witchcraft • Webster's work was well received by members of the Royal Society, which added credibility both to his arguments and his methods, through his use of evidence gained first-hand • Webster's work was responded to, and was therefore part of, a wider public intellectual debate regarding magic and witchcraft. This meant that the time was right for these beliefs to be more openly questioned and challenged. Arguments and evidence that challenge the proposition should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include: • Reginald Scot's <i>The Discoverie of Witchcraft</i> (1584) was the first major English work of scepticism and started changing attitudes to witchcraft in Britain • Samuel Harsnett, in <i>A Discovery of the Fraudulent Practices of John Darrel</i> (1599), revived the debate about the nature of witchcraft by highlighting cases of fraud • Charles I questioned the accused women involved in the Pendle Swindle, and his scepticism marked a shift in elite beliefs • Ady's questioning of how witches were defined, as those who tempted others to be ungodly, in <i>A Candle in the Dark</i> (1656), influenced the steep decline in witch trials in Britain from the 1660s • Fraudulent cases, e.g. the Demon Drummer of Tedworth (1662), further contributed to the growth of scepticism in the period • Bekker's <i>The Enchanted World</i> (1691) sold 4000 copies in the first two months and was translated into a number of European languages, meaning it had a more widespread influence on beliefs • Lord Chief Justice Sir John Holt largely ended convictions for witchcraft. This influenced the outcome of subsequent trials for witchcraft in the 18th century. Other relevant material must be credited.

Question	Indicative content
5	Answers will be credited according to candidates' deployment of material in relation to the qualities outlined in the generic mark scheme. The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all the material which is indicated as relevant. Candidates are expected to reach a judgement on whether Francis Bacon and the empirical scientific method had a limited impact on the changing approach to human understanding and knowledge in the years c1580-c1750. Arguments and evidence that Francis Bacon and the empirical scientific method had a limited impact on the changing approach to human understanding and knowledge in the years c1580-c1750 should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include: • Scepticism and sceptical publications existed before the writings of Francis Bacon, e.g. Reginald Scot's <i>The Discoverie of Witchcraft</i> (1584) • The work of Hobbes and Locke was more significant in changing human understanding of the supernatural, e.g. Locke's <i>Essay Concerning Human Understanding</i> (1690), which dismissed beliefs in the supernatural • A changing approach to human understanding and knowledge was not steady after the writings of Bacon were published and traditional beliefs continued to be widely held • Bacon's inductive, experimental method was not adopted until later in the seventeenth century and, even then, this was not widespread • The Witchcraft Act was not repealed until 1736, over a century after Bacon's death, which provides evidence that Bacon and the development of empiricism had limited impact on legislation for most of the period. Arguments and evidence that challenge the proposition should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include: • The growing belief in empiricism and the modern scientific method challenged many popular supernatural beliefs by providing rational explanations for supposedly supernatural events, marking a shift in human understanding • Inductive reasoning, i.e. the observation of facts and evidence before creating theory, could be used to explain supernatural physical phenomena, discrediting beliefs in magic and witchcraft • Bacon's work, e.g. <i>Novum Organum</i> (1620), advocated the experimental method and was referenced at the foundation of the Royal Society; reflecting a changed approach to human understanding and knowledge • His method of empirical thinking influenced thinkers, e.g. Sir Thomas Browne. Bacon's rational interpretation of the Bible led to beliefs in religious toleration – a consequence was less scapegoating and fewer accusations of witchcraft. Other relevant material must be credited.