

CHAPTER 7

HISTORY

The following report should be read in conjunction with the History question papers of the November 2018 NSC examinations.

7.1 PERFORMANCE TRENDS (2014–2018)

The number of candidates who wrote the History examination in 2018 increased by 6 868 candidates in comparison to that of 2017. This year there was an improvement in the performance of candidates as indicated by 89,7% of candidates achieving at the 30% level, with 72,6% achieving at the 40% level.

Table 7.1.1 Overall Achievement in History

Year	No. Wrote	No. achieved at 30% and above	% achieved at 30% and above	No. achieved at 40% and above	% achieved at 40% and above
2014	115 686	99 823	86,3	76 904	66,5
2015	154 398	129 643	84,0	97 646	63,2
2016	157 594	132 457	84,0	101 347	64,3
2017	147 668	127 031	86,0	99 669	67,5
2018	154 536	138 570	89,7	112 266	72,6

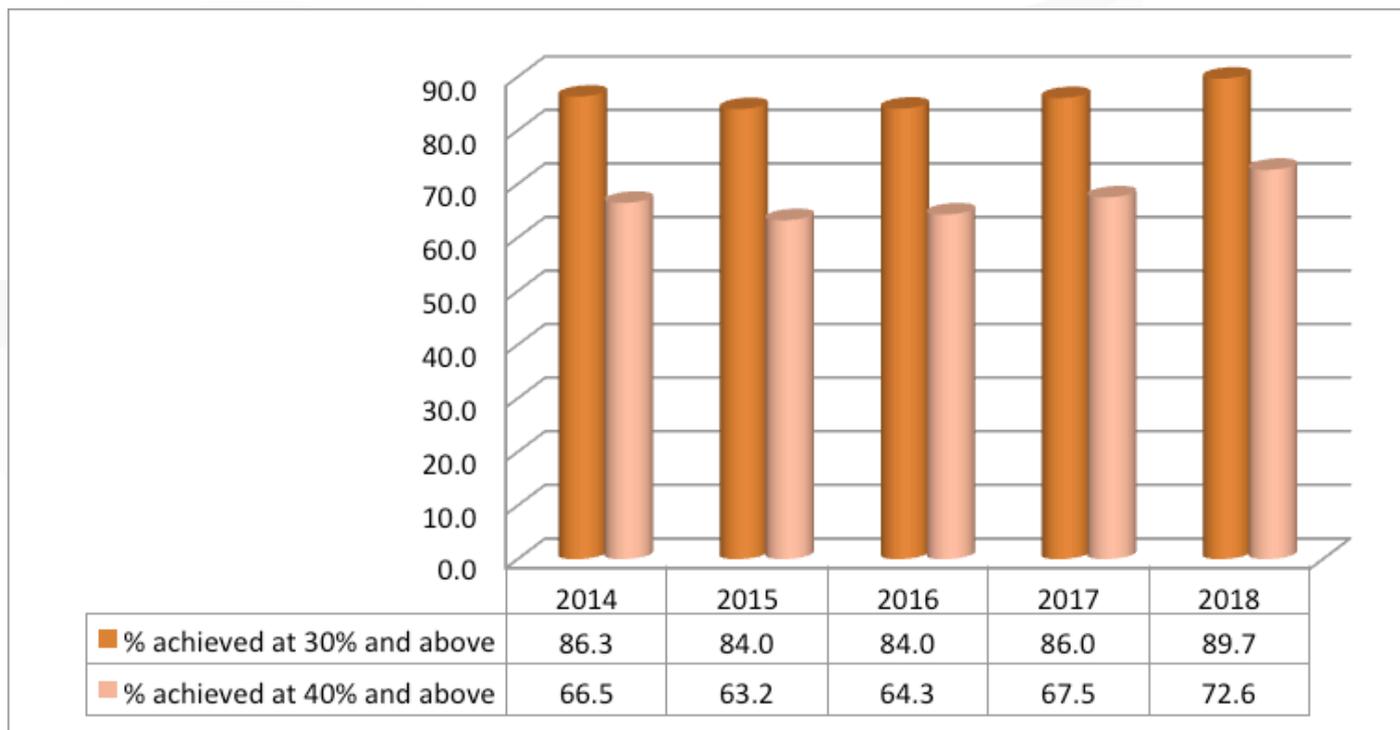
It is evident from the statistics that the numbers of candidates taking History as a subject in the FET phase has increased significantly since 2014. Simultaneously, there has been a significant, consistent and gradual improvement in the quality of candidates' performance. It is gratifying to note that candidates are being taught the prescribed content in both Papers 1 and 2 and this is apparent in the number of candidates who responded to specific choice questions.

However, in SECTION A of both question papers (source-based questions), it was clear that many candidates were still unable to answer higher-order questions (e.g. interpretation, analysis, compare, contrast, usefulness and reliability of evidence in sources). Furthermore, a significant number of candidates could not write coherent paragraphs.

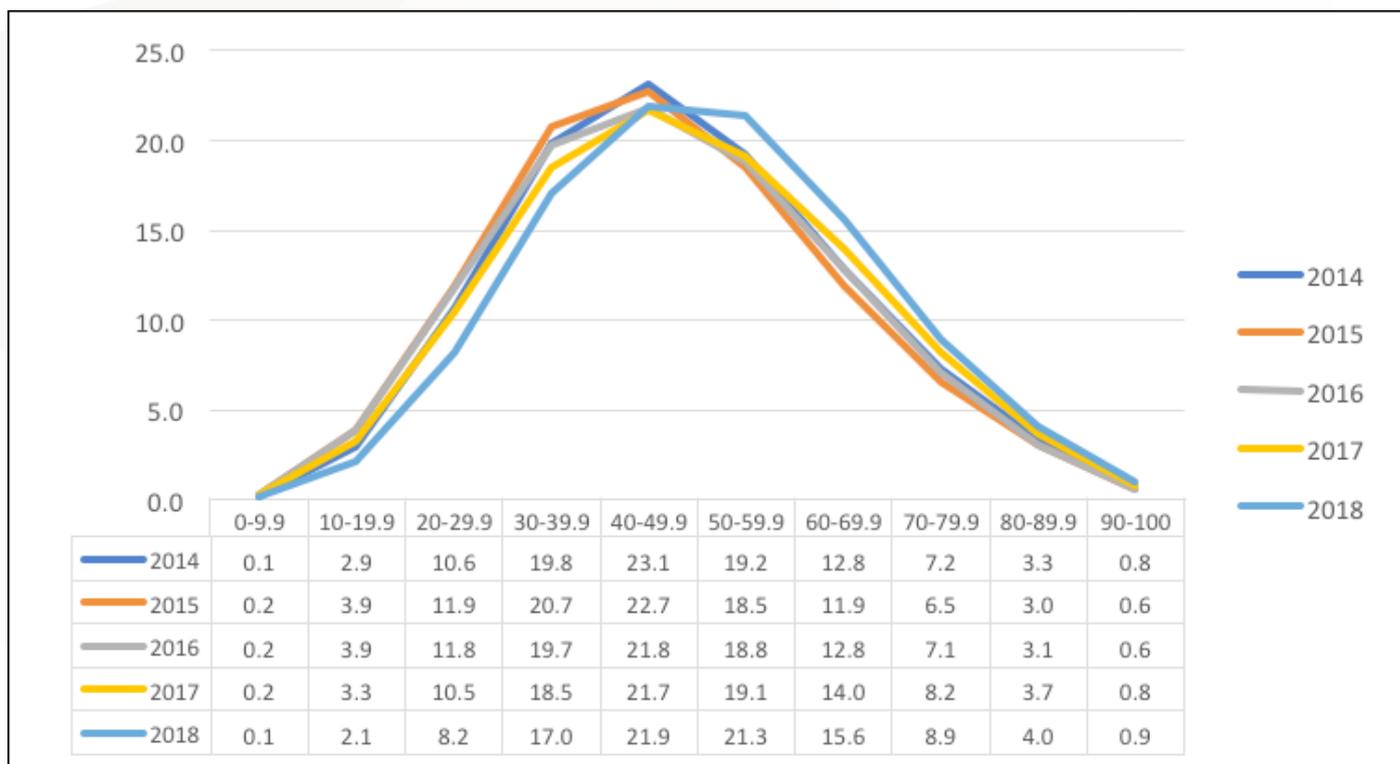
In SECTION B of the question papers (essay questions), a large number of candidates displayed good content knowledge but were incapable of taking a stance and developing an independent line of argument. Many essays lacked introductions and conclusions.

Teachers must make a concerted effort to ensure that the prescribed content is taught in a user-friendly manner and this must be underpinned by the requisite historical skills to ensure a further improvement in the overall pass rate.

Graph 7.1.1 Overall Achievement in History (Percentage)



Graph 7.1.2 Performance Distribution Curves in History (Percentage)



7.2 OVERVIEW OF LEARNER PERFORMANCE IN PAPER 1

- In the main, candidates' performance in this question paper ranged from fair to good. It was evident that some candidates lacked relevant content knowledge in specific topics (e.g. Independent Africa: Case Study – Angola and Comparative Study – the Congo and Tanzania).
- In SECTION A: SOURCE-BASED QUESTIONS, several candidates were unable to extract, select, interpret, analyse, evaluate and synthesise information from the sources that were provided. As a result, responses to specific higher-order questions, where candidates were required to compare and ascertain the usefulness of sources, were generally unsatisfactory.
- A significant number of candidates were unable to use the relevant information from the sources and their own knowledge to effectively write a well-structured paragraph.
- In SECTION B: ESSAY QUESTIONS, a large number of candidates demonstrated an understanding of the content knowledge but were unsuccessful in selecting, organising and connecting relevant information to support their line of argument to answer the question posed.

7.3 DIAGNOSTIC QUESTION ANALYSIS FOR PAPER 1

The following graph is based on data that was gathered from a random sample of candidates' scripts. While this graph might not accurately reflect the national averages, it serves as a useful tool in analysing how candidates performed in specific choice questions.

Figure 7.3.1 Average Marks per Question Expressed as a Percentage: Paper 1

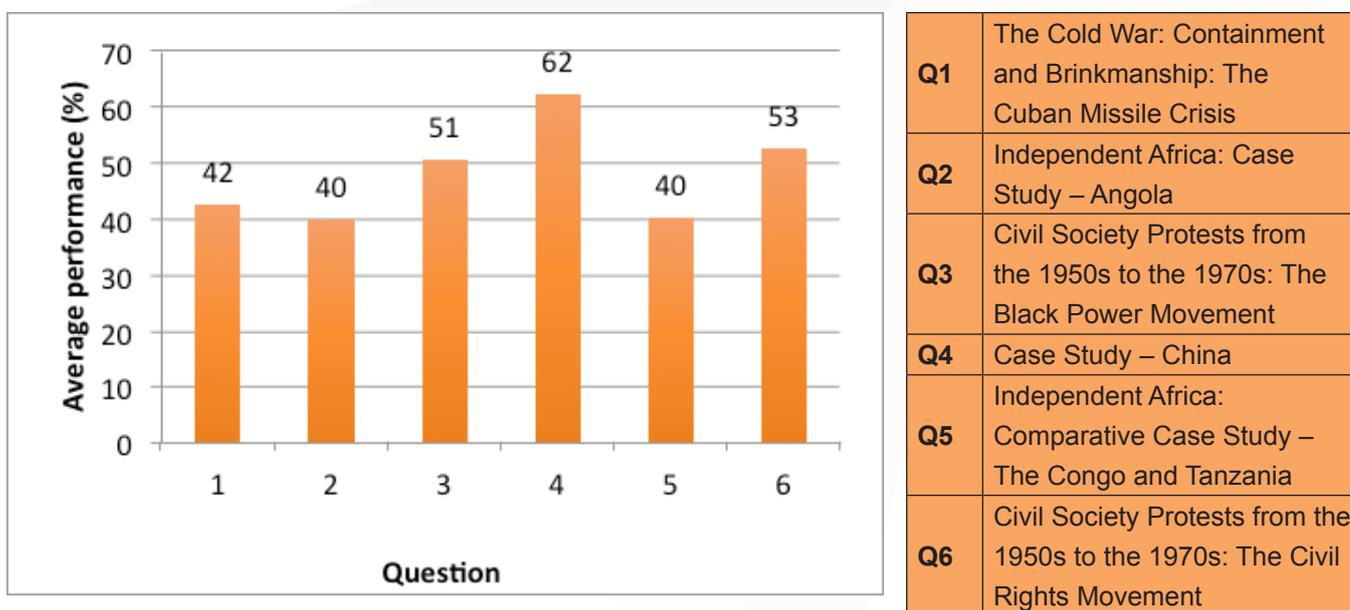
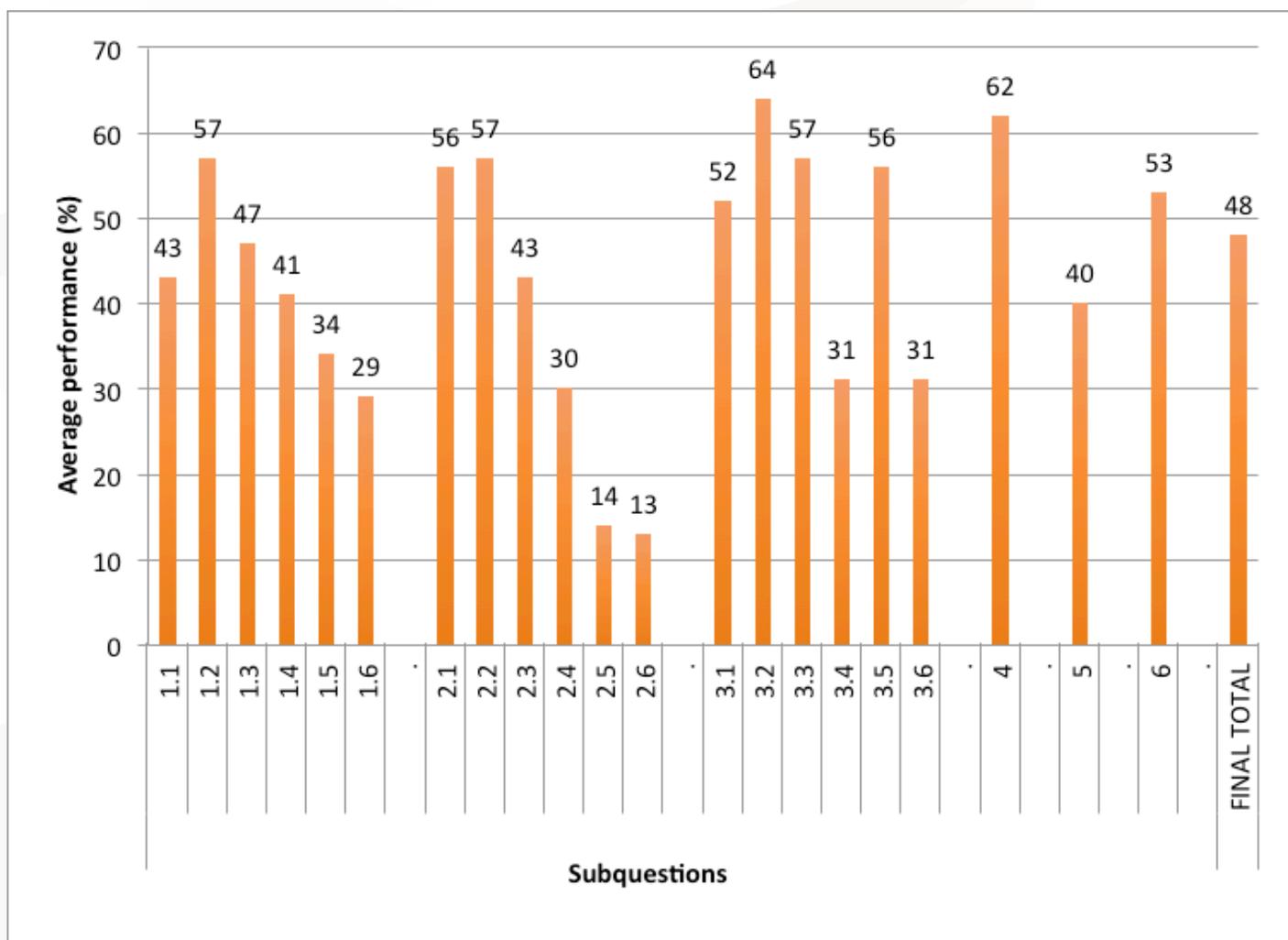


Figure 7.3.2: Average marks per sub question expressed as a percentage: Paper 1



7.4 ANALYSIS OF LEARNER PERFORMANCE IN EACH QUESTION IN PAPER 1

SECTION A: SOURCE-BASED QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: THE COLD WAR: CONTAINMENT AND BRINKMANSHIP: THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS

A significant number of candidates attempted this question. Overall, the performances ranged from fair to satisfactory.

Common Errors and Misconceptions

- In Q1.1.3, it was evident that many candidates were unable to make a valid comment regarding what was implied by the statement, 'We're eyeball to eyeball and I think the other fellow just blinked', in the context of the deployment of Soviet missiles to Cuba.
- In Q1.2.3, a number of candidates could not explain why Khrushchev was prepared to support a decision 'within the framework of the Security Council' regarding Cuba.

- c. In Q1.4.2, a large number of candidates failed to explain why the Americans considered the International Committee of the Red Cross as a suitable agent for the inspection of 'Cuba-bound cargoes'.
- d. In Q1.6, several candidates were unsuccessful in using the information in the relevant sources and their own knowledge to effectively write an organised paragraph, explaining how the Soviet Union and the United States of America responded to the deployment of missiles to Cuba in 1961.

QUESTION 2: INDEPENDENT AFRICA: CASE STUDY – ANGOLA

Very few candidates attempted this question. Generally, the performances ranged from poor to satisfactory.

Common Errors and Misconceptions

- a. In Q2.1.2, a large number of candidates were unable to comment on why Vorster defended South Africa's involvement in Angola.
- b. In Q2.3.2, several candidates found it difficult to ascertain whether an historian would find the information in the source useful when researching the outcome of the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale.
- c. In Q2.5, the differences in the information in Sources 2C and 2D regarding the outcome of the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale were not well explained.
- d. In Q2.6, several candidates failed to use the information in the relevant sources, and their own knowledge, to effectively write a coherent paragraph explaining the role that foreign powers played in the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale.

QUESTION 3: CIVIL SOCIETY PROTESTS FROM THE 1950s TO THE 1970s: THE BLACK POWER MOVEMENT

A large number of candidates attempted this question and performances ranged from fair to good.

Common Errors and Misconceptions

- a. In Q3.4, many candidates were unable to determine how the information, regarding Angela Davis, in Source 3B differed from the evidence in Source 3C.
- b. In Q3.5.4, the majority of candidates could not comment on the usefulness of the information in the source regarding the Black Panther Party.
- c. Q3.6 was generally poorly answered by a number of candidates who were unsuccessful in using the information in the relevant sources and their own knowledge to effectively write a well-structured paragraph, explaining the influence that the philosophy of Black Power had on African Americans in the 1960s and 1970s.

SECTION B: ESSAY QUESTIONS

QUESTION 4: CASE STUDY – CHINA

The performance of candidates, who attempted this question, ranged from satisfactory to good.

Common Errors and Misconceptions

- a. It was evident that a few candidates were unable to explain to what extent Mao Zedong's policies of the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution were successful in transforming Communist China between 1957 and 1969. They were not able to sustain the line of argument throughout the essay.

- b. A number of candidates' introductions to this essay question contained irrelevant background information. In addition, the content was largely descriptive, there was little attempt to develop a line of argument and to draw convincing conclusions.

QUESTION 5: INDEPENDENT AFRICA: COMPARATIVE CASE STUDIES – THE CONGO AND TANZANIA

This question was attempted by few candidates. Generally, the performances ranged from poor to satisfactory.

Common Errors and Misconceptions:

- a. Most candidates were unable to critically discuss how Mobutu Sese Seko (the Congo) and Julius Nyerere (Tanzania) addressed the economic and political challenges that confronted their respective countries after attaining independence in the 1960s.
- b. A large number of candidates wrote narrative essays on how Mobutu Sese Seko and Julius Nyerere addressed the challenges that faced their respective countries instead of a comparative analysis. Essays lacked introductions and there was little attempt to draw valid conclusions.

QUESTION 6: CIVIL SOCIETY PROTESTS FROM THE 1950s TO THE 1970s: THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

A large number of candidates attempted this question. Performances ranged from satisfactory to good.

Common Errors and Misconceptions

- a. Although many candidates took a stance, they were unable to support and sustain their line of argument. They struggled to demonstrate how the other forms of protests contributed to the fight against discrimination in the United States of America in the 1960s.
- b. A few candidates wrote narrative essays which lacked a clear line of argument and persuasive conclusions.

7.5 OVERVIEW OF LEARNER PERFORMANCE IN PAPER 2

- a. Generally candidates' performances in this question paper ranged from fair to good.
- b. In SECTION A: SOURCE-BASED QUESTIONS, it was evident that a large number of candidates were unable to extract, select, interpret, analyse, evaluate and synthesise information from the sources that were provided. In addition, candidates were unable to define concepts in historical context, compare perspectives and ascertain the usefulness of evidence in sources.
- c. The majority of candidates were unable to use relevant information from the sources and their own knowledge to effectively write an organised and coherent paragraph.
- d. In SECTION B: ESSAY QUESTIONS, several candidates had the requisite content knowledge but were unable to use the content effectively to answer the question posed. They struggled to correctly select, organise and connect relevant information to support their line of argument.

7.6 DIAGNOSTIC QUESTION ANALYSIS FOR PAPER 2

The following graph is based on data that was gathered from a random sample of candidates' scripts. While this graph might not accurately reflect the national averages, it serves as a useful tool in analysing how candidates performed in specific choice questions.

Figure 7.6.1: Average Marks per Question Expressed as a Percentage: Paper 2

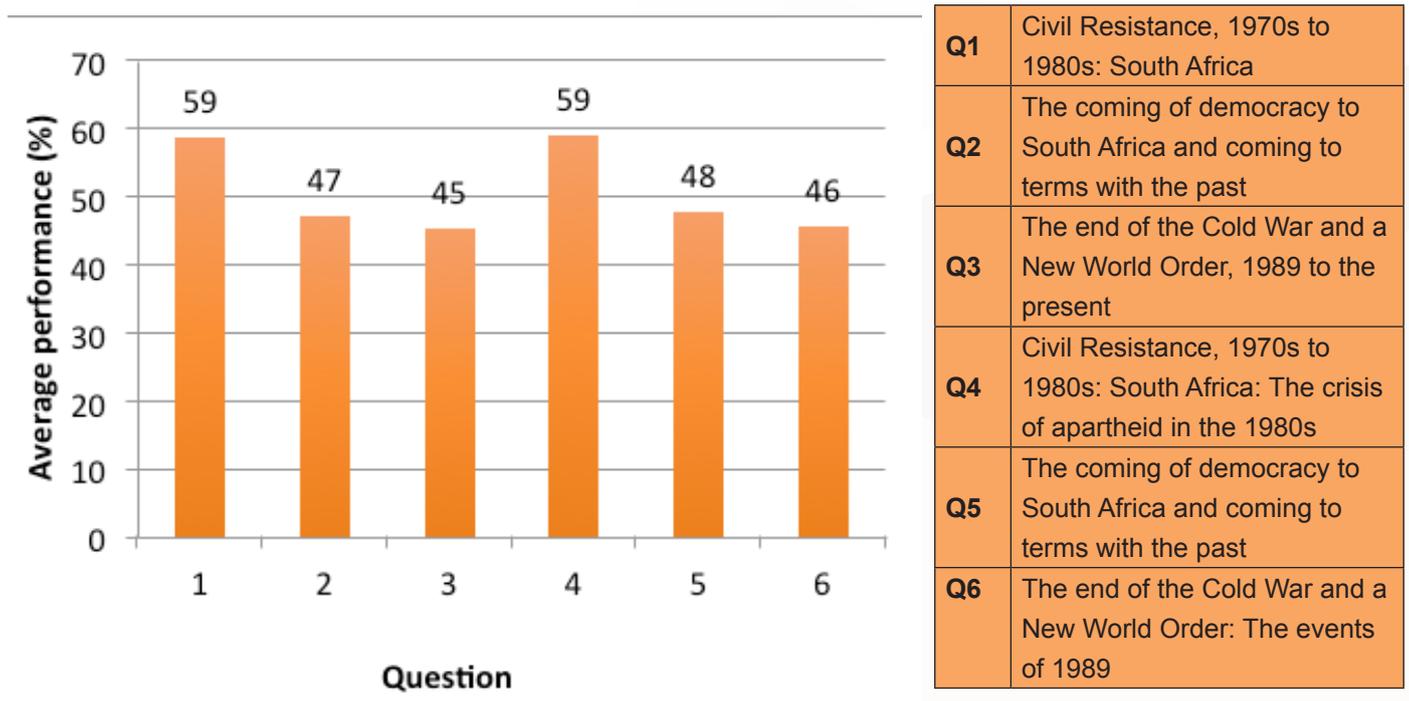
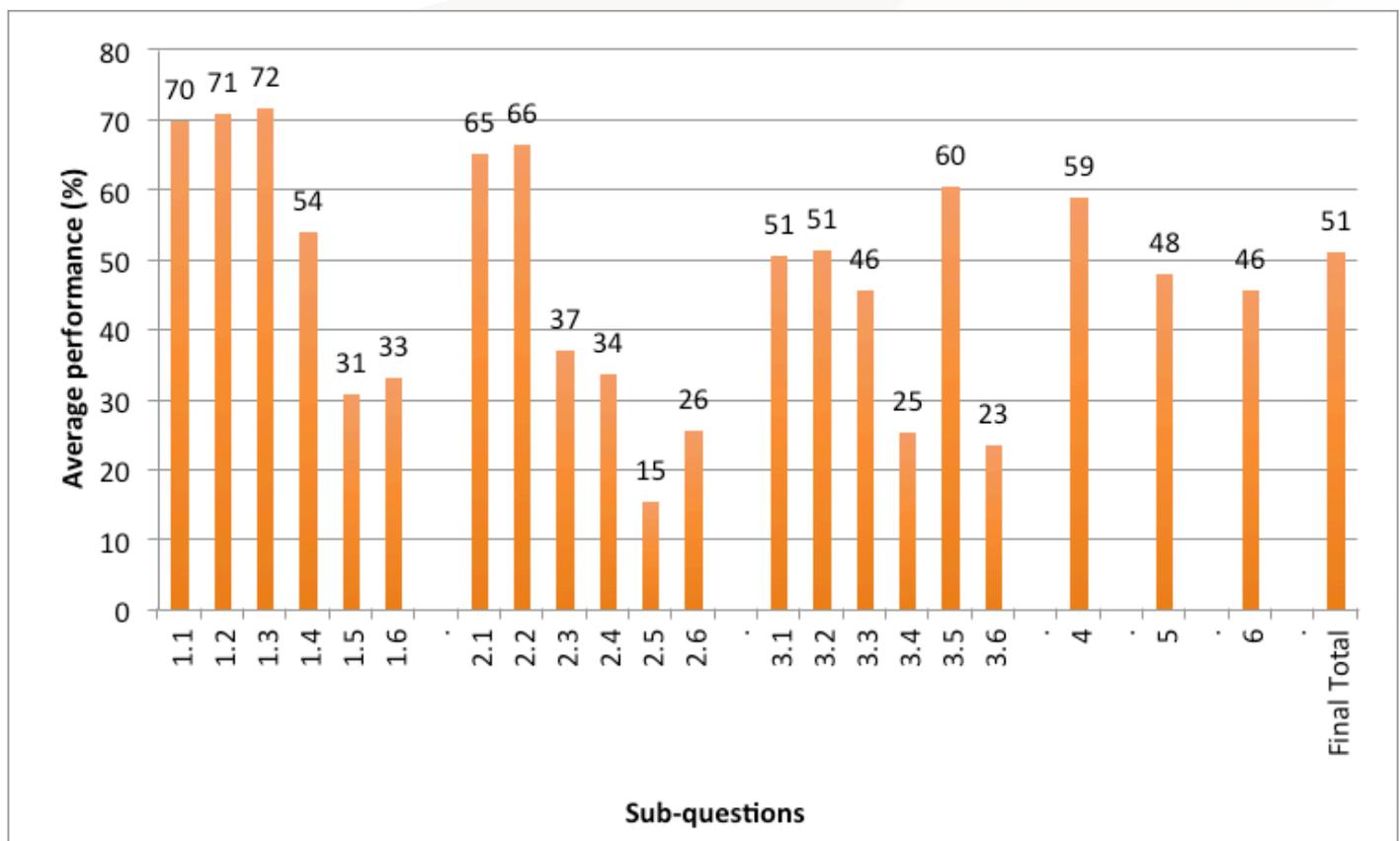


Figure 7.6.2: Average Marks per Subquestion Expressed as a Percentage: Paper 2



7.7 ANALYSIS OF LEARNER PERFORMANCE IN EACH QUESTION IN PAPER 2

SECTION A: SOURCE BASED QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: CIVIL RESISTANCE, 1970s TO 1980s: SOUTH AFRICA

A large number of candidates attempted this question and performances ranged from fair to good.

Common Errors and Misconceptions

- In Q1.1.4, several candidates were unable to comment on how activists from the Black Consciousness Movement intended to break the 'yoke of oppression' in South Africa.
- In Q1.3.2, many candidates found it difficult to use the information in the source and their own knowledge to explain why Sam Nzima did not stop to help Hector Pieterse.
- In Q1.5, a large number of candidates struggled to compare the evidence in Sources 1C and 1D regarding Sam Nzima's role during the Soweto Uprising of 1976.
- In Q1.6, several candidates were unsuccessful in using the information in the relevant sources and their own knowledge to effectively write a cogent paragraph on how the philosophy of Black Consciousness influenced South African students in the 1970s.

QUESTION 2: THE COMING OF DEMOCRACY TO SOUTH AFRICA AND COMING TO TERMS WITH THE PAST

A significant number of candidates attempted this question and their performances ranged from poor to satisfactory.

Common Errors and Misconceptions

- In Q2.1.2 (b), a number of candidates were unable to explain how the fears of the ANC were dealt with by the TRC.
- In Q2.1.3, many candidates could not define the term *reconciliation* in the context of the TRC. Candidates gave vague and generalised responses.
- In Q2.3.2, several candidates found it difficult to ascertain the usefulness of the source regarding the circumstances under which Rick Turner was killed.
- In Q2.5.2, many candidates struggled to comment on why Zapiro made reference to 'VLAKPLAAS' in the cartoon.
- In Q2.6, most candidates were unsuccessful in using the information in the relevant sources and their own knowledge to effectively write a coherent paragraph on whether the Truth and Reconciliation Commission helped victims of political crimes to find closure.

QUESTION 3: THE END OF THE COLD WAR AND A NEW WORLD ORDER, 1989 TO THE PRESENT

Very few candidates answered this question and performances ranged from fair to good.

Common Errors and Misconceptions

- In Q3.2.2, a large number of candidates were unable to explain why SACTWU disagreed with the Cape Clothing Association's comments regarding job losses in the clothing and textile industry.

- b. In Q3.4, candidates could not compare evidence presented in Sources 3B and 3C. They failed to explain how the information in these sources supported each other regarding job losses in South Africa's clothing and textile industry.
- c. In Q3.6, a significant number of candidates were unsuccessful in writing a logical paragraph explaining how globalisation contributed to job losses in the South African clothing and textile industry after 1990.

SECTION B: ESSAY QUESTIONS

QUESTION 4: CIVIL RESISTANCE, 1970s TO 1980s: SOUTH AFRICA – THE CRISIS OF APARTHEID IN THE 1980s

The performances of candidates in this question ranged from fair to good.

Common Errors and Misconceptions

- a. The candidates that attempted this question were unable to critically discuss the various forms of international resistance which contributed to the demise of the apartheid regime in the 1980s.
- b. A significant number of candidates could not demonstrate how the various forms of international resistance led to the demise of the apartheid regime. They wrote narrative accounts which did not address the demands of the question.

QUESTION 5: THE COMING OF DEMOCRACY TO SOUTH AFRICA AND COMING TO TERMS WITH THE PAST

This was a very popular question and candidates' performances ranged from poor to good.

Common Errors and Misconceptions

- a. A large number of candidates were unable to state whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement nor could they support their line of argument with relevant historical evidence.
- b. There was a tendency to narrate the various turning points that occurred in South Africa between 1990 and 1994, without taking a stance and supporting a line of argument (i.e. the role of Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela).

QUESTION 6: THE END OF THE COLD WAR AND A NEW WORLD ORDER: THE EVENTS OF 1989

A few candidates attempted this question and performances ranged from poor to satisfactory.

Common Errors and Misconceptions

- a. Many candidates were unable to explain to what extent the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 paved the way for the National Party and the African National Congress to begin talks.
- b. Candidates merely wrote narrative essays, without taking or sustaining a line of argument.

7.7 SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT IN BOTH PAPER 1 AND PAPER 2

Teachers should:

- a. Ensure that learners are provided with the necessary historical skills, such as the definition of concepts in historical context, extraction, interpretation, analysis, ascertaining the reliability, limitations and usefulness of historical sources. These foundational historical skills must be underpinned with the teaching and learning of the prescribed content.
- b. Expose learners to a variety of sources and the related source-based skills such as interpreting, analysing, evaluating, comparing, contrasting and ascertaining the limitations, usefulness and justification of such sources. Learners should be taught the relevant themes, using interactive, user-friendly teaching methodology, relevant notes so that they have an in-depth understanding of the content focus areas. Refer to past NCS question papers for practical examples as to how these difficult historical skills can be taught.
- c. Sharpen paragraph-writing skills by ensuring that learners do the following:
 - * Read the question and underline the key words;
 - * Study all sources and have a thorough understanding of them;
 - * Underline the key words in the written sources and incorporate them in writing their paragraphs;
 - * Do not copy directly from the sources but use their own words, e.g. 'According to Source 1A ...';
 - * Ensure that responses are to the point by structuring short sentences to frame the paragraph; and
 - * Always make reference to the question when writing a paragraph.
- d. Develop the requisite essay-writing techniques by:
 - * Coaching learners on how to unpack the question posed;
 - * Underlining the key words in the question. If the question demands that a stance be taken, this must be stated in the introduction;
 - * Using the PEEL writing template below to teach learners how to write an argumentative essay:
 - **Point:** State the point by indicating a line of argument.
 - Each paragraph should include a point that sustains the major point (line of argument) that was made in the introduction.
 - **Explanation:** Explain the point or line of argument by demonstrating how it relates to the question posed (line of argument).
 - **Example (Evidence):** Select appropriate evidence to support the line of argument. Relevant examples should be given.
 - **Link:** Ensure that the line of argument is linked in a logical and coherent manner;
- e. Ensure that the prescribed content, as contained in the CAPS and the 2017 examination guideline document, is covered comprehensively.

- f. Make an effort to expose learners to innovative, relevant and user-friendly resources as well as examination techniques.
- g. Practice source-based, paragraph and essay writing skills by working with past NSC (CAPS) compliant question papers.
- h. Attend content and assessment workshops, to firstly, familiarise themselves with the requirements and demands of the CAPS and the 2017 examination guideline document and secondly, to use recent and relevant teaching and learning methods in classrooms.
- i. Undertake the necessary research on the latest historical trends in the teaching and learning of history.
- j. Interact with relevant resources such as books, historical journals, internet sites, DVDs, YouTube videos, Google, SA History Online (SAHO), the History Channel, television news channels, South African Society for History Teaching (SASHT) and newspapers in order to meaningfully convey the prescribed content to learners.

Subject Advisors should:

- a. Plan, prepare and conduct intensive content and assessment workshops on problematic areas as contained in this report with FET History teachers.
- b. Conduct assessment training on how to mark higher-order source-based questions (usefulness, compare and paragraph writing) and essay questions. Sample learner responses should be used to train teachers on how to correctly use the levels rubric and matrix to assess paragraphs and essays.
- c. Develop appropriate resource material with which both teachers and learners can interact.
- d. Workshop teachers on challenging topics identified in the 2018 NSC examinations.

Teacher development should:

- a. Ensure that new teachers are supported and guided on pedagogical, content and teaching methodology.
- b. Assist teachers on how to plan, prepare and present interactive History lessons.
- c. Prepare educators to implement the English Across the Curriculum (EAC).