



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS  
General Certificate of Education  
Advanced Subsidiary Level and Advanced Level

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**HISTORY**

**9697/12**

Paper 1 Modern European History, 1789–1939

**October/November 2012**

**3 hours**

Additional Materials: Answer Paper

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

Write your Centre number, candidate number and name on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen.

You may use a soft pencil for any rough working.

Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

**Section A**

Answer **Question 1**.

**Section B**

Answer any **three** questions.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

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This document consists of **4** printed pages.



## Section A: The Origins of World War I, 1870–1914

You **must** answer Question 1.

### BRITAIN'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR WORLD WAR I

1 Read the Sources, and then answer the question.

When answering **Question 1**, candidates are advised to pay particular attention to the interpretation and evaluation of the Sources both individually and as a group.

#### Source A

Britain reveals its true colours at a moment when it thinks that Germany has serious problems and can be disposed of! That mean gang of shopkeepers has tried to trick us. The boldest deception was the words of King George V to my brother, Prince Henry, 'Britain shall remain neutral and try to keep out of this crisis as long as possible.' Sir Edward Grey, the British Foreign Minister, proves that the King is a liar. Grey's words to our Ambassador in Britain reveal a guilty conscience because he feels that he has tricked us. It is a threat combined with a bluff in order to divide Germany from Austria and prevent us from mobilising. Grey wants to shift the responsibility for the war. He knows that, if he were to say one single, serious, sharp word to the French and Russian governments, and were to warn them to remain neutral, both would become quiet at once. But he takes care not to say the word and threatens us instead! The common dog! Britain *alone* has the responsibility for war and peace, not Germany.

*Kaiser William II's handwritten comments on a report from the German Ambassador to Britain which stated that Grey wanted friendly relations with Germany, 29 July 1914.*

#### Source B

I have devoted all my efforts as German Chancellor towards bringing about, in partnership with Britain, a state of affairs which would prevent the madness of self-destruction by Europe's civilised nations. Russia has destroyed these plans by treacherously playing with fire. Tell Grey that I firmly hope that Britain, by its attitude in this world crisis, will lay a foundation so that, after it has come to an end, we may come to achieve all that Russia's policy has destroyed for the moment.

*Message from Bethmann Hollweg, German Chancellor, to the German Ambassador to Britain, 3 August 1914.*

#### Source C

King George V has addressed the following message to Admiral Jellicoe: 'At this grave moment in our national history, I send to you and the men of the fleets my confidence that you will revive the old glories of the navy, and prove once again the sure shield of Britain in the hour of trial.'

Germany has taken the first hostile step by destroying a British warship. At the present time Germany is at war with Britain, Russia, France and Belgium. It seems as if Germany, in its ambition to control the destiny of the whole of Europe, was ready to embark on any extravagant scheme of adventure, however slight her chances. Britain's attitude has always been plain, straightforward and perfectly understandable. We were prepared to stand aside from the conflict that has now involved almost all Europe. But we insisted, and had to insist, on two things: Belgium's neutrality should be respected, and the German fleet should not bomb defenceless French towns. Germany tried to bribe us with peace to desert our friends and duty. But Britain has preferred the path of honour.

*Report in the 'Daily Mirror', a popular British newspaper, 4 August 1914.*

**Source D**

No one in Britain wanted war. The view so widely held in Germany that Britain engineered the war in order to destroy our economic competition, which was becoming dangerous to her, has little justification. But Britain did fear Germany's growing political and military power. It felt that its own supremacy and security were threatened by the German navy and believed that Germany intended to seize supreme power over the continent of Europe. British politicians intended its Ententes to be a means of maintaining the balance of power. They wished to keep German power and ambitions within reasonable limits. There is no indication that the Ententes were intended as instruments of war. There is no doubt that Britain underestimated the danger of dividing Europe into two hostile alliances. When they did realise it, they tried to get in touch with Germany again but without surrendering the Ententes and without losing their supremacy. But by that time, Britain was too closely bound to one alliance.

*From a German history of World War I, published 1963.*

**Source E**

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, Britain's policy had been to contain Germany. Once it was convinced that Germany was threatening its power, Britain abandoned its policy of isolation and tightened its links with France and Russia. The Kaiser felt insulted. The British, who had offered Germany friendly relations during the reign of Queen Victoria, his grandmother, were now rejecting his policies. A sense of personal grievance was added and German nationalism increased. Delbrück, a German historian, wrote in 1899, 'Germany must become a world power. We cannot go back. We can do this with Britain or against her. With her means peace. Against her means war.' German leaders were misled by the peaceful statements of British politicians. They were sure that Britain would not enter the war. They were convinced that Germany could make some kind of agreement with the British. They reacted with surprise and rage to Britain's declaration of war when they invaded Belgium.

*From a French history of World War I, published 1973.*

Now answer the following question.

*'Britain should take most of the responsibility for war in 1914.' Use Sources A–E to show how far the evidence confirms this statement.*

**Section B**

You must answer **three** questions from this section.

- 2 'The most serious problems of the ancien régime in France were financial, not political.' How far do you agree with this judgement?
- 3 Did the Industrial Revolution do more to strengthen or weaken the governing classes by the end of the nineteenth century?  
(You should refer to developments in **at least two** of Britain, France and Germany in your answer.)
- 4 Why did many European rulers in the period from 1815 to 1849 believe that liberalism and nationalism were dangerous?
- 5 How far had European countries achieved their imperial aims by 1914?  
(You should refer to **at least two** of Britain, France and Germany in your answer.)
- 6 'The main reason why the Tsarist regime fell in February 1917 was Nicholas II's incompetence.' How far do you agree with this claim?
- 7 How totalitarian was Hitler's government of Germany from 1934 to 1939?
- 8 Why did Russia remain less industrialised than Britain and Germany during the period to 1914?

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*Copyright Acknowledgements:*

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Question 1 Source E      © M Ferro; *The Great War 1914–1918*; Routledge; 1973.

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