



## **General Certificate of Education**

# **History 1041**

## *Specification*

### **Unit HIS1D**

# **Report on the Examination**

## *2009 examination – June series*

**This Report on the Examination uses the [new numbering system](#)**

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# Unit HIS1D

## Unit 1D: Britain, 1603–1642

### General Comments

The examination paper was accessible to the overwhelming majority of candidates. Almost all candidates attempted two full questions and candidates chose equally amongst the various combinations i.e. questions 1 and 2, 2 and 3 and 1 and 3. In general candidates were well-prepared for the examination and produced answers which were knowledgeable and clearly expressed. Overall, the quality of written communication was high although there were some frequent spelling mistakes such as 'persue', 'parliment' and 'thrown' instead of 'throne'. However, there were also some excellent answers with explicitly focused, coherent and well-expressed arguments supported by precise knowledge and demonstrating range and depth of understanding leading to a reasoned judgement. Although the time constraints prevented some candidates from completing all their answers, most candidates seem to have completed in the time and a small minority were able to produce impressively long answers. Nevertheless the short time for the essay questions does make it even more important that candidates focus on the question explicitly from the beginning, link their material clearly to the question and related factors, and arrive at a reasoned conclusion. Having a sound command of relevant knowledge, including chronology, makes achieving this demanding task that much easier. As always, sound preparation of the material and practice in answering questions against time, are the keys to success.

There were several ways in which candidates could have improved the quality of their answers. In the a) questions (01/03/05) a significant number of candidates lost the focus on reasons and digressed into writing about methods, effects or success/failure. Given that there are 12 marks and only about 12 minutes in which to write the answer, it is vital that candidates stick to the question. i.e. identifying and explaining a range of reasons. Similarly in both (01/03/05) and (02/04/06) questions candidates should try to develop the points that they make by providing supporting evidence and/or explanation. It is also important to try to link the various factors together as well as to the question so as to provide a coherent answer rather than a random list. To achieve the highest marks, candidates need to provide some evidence of reasoned prioritisation and/or judgement. They should not be content with merely asserting that factor X was the most important but be able to provide some reasoned explanation as to why. Candidates should try to differentiate in some way between the various possibilities, e.g. by date, by short-term or long-term, by theme or by person. A firm grasp of chronology is also very helpful. A significant number of candidates weakened their answers by confusing events which occurred in different decades, or by suggesting that an event, which occurred later, or a person who was long dead, played an important role!

### Question 1

**01** This question produced a range of marks. Many candidates had clearly studied the reasons why James was keen on a full union. Some candidates, however, did not seem so well-prepared and offered only speculative or rather dubious reasons with little development. Others lost the focus on reasons and wrote extensively about the opposition to the proposal – material more relevant to Question 1(02). More might have been made about how the union of crowns had already helped bring peace to the Borders and how a full union with free trade could have benefited both countries even more.

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- 02** This question produced some very good answers, with many candidates able to explain the difficulties James's proposed union gave rise to in Parliament, as well as those arising from other factors such as financial, constitutional, religious and foreign policy issues. Some were able to reach a reasoned conclusion as to the importance of these various factors. However, as in answers to Question 1(01), candidates sometimes either digressed from the central issue or became bogged down in one particular factor at the expense of other considerations. This was particularly true of religious aspects, with some candidates becoming too absorbed in the Millenary Petition, the Hampton Court Conference and the Authorised Bible (really outside of Parliament) at the expense of difficulties over parliamentary privileges or finance. A number of candidates mentioned complaints in parliament about recusancy fines not being strictly enforced but only a few referred to complaints about Bancroft's Canons and the 90 ejected Puritan ministers.

### **Question 2**

- 03** Some candidates produced very good answers to this question. The best were able to write both about general reasons for James's pursuit of a Spanish marriage for his son, such as his desire to mediate in European affairs and to balance the marriages of his children between the Protestant and Catholic camps, but also identify specific reasons in the period such as recovering the Palatinate peacefully and improving his declining financial position through a large dowry. However, a large number of candidates spent unnecessary time describing the fiasco of the 1623 Madrid trip.
- 04** Although there were some very good answers to Question 2(04) there were also weaknesses in many responses. Some candidates spent too far long on 1623–1624 instead of focusing their answer on the period after the outbreak of the Spanish War. Many candidates failed to analyse the impact of the Spanish, and later the French, war on a royal financial system which was already heavily in debt. Candidates did not bring out the links between the cost of war, Parliament's failure to provide adequate money, Charles's determination to raise money by unpopular means and the legal/constitutional clashes which resulted both in and out of Parliament. A lot of answers suggested that candidates wanted the question to be on Buckingham, rather than on relations with Spain. Although there was clearly overlap, the focus of this question was different. Overall, candidates need to grasp more firmly the links between the various factors, especially war, finance and constitutional issues; Buckingham as a useful scapegoat; Charles errors; and other issues such as religion. Quite a lot of answers gave the impression that candidates did not appreciate that the years 1624–1629 were dominated by two wars and so quite different to the years immediately before and afterwards.

### **Question 3**

- 05** This question was answered well overall. Most candidates were able to provide at least outline reasons as to why Laud wished to reform the Church, and some answers showed an excellent understanding of abstract theological issues as well as the complexity of Laud's motivation. For example, a significant number of candidates were able to combine ecclesiastical with political reasons often linking the two quite neatly. However, some answers got diverted into events in Scotland after 1637 when the focus of the question was on the Church of England, and other answers became too enmeshed in Laud's methods rather than his motives.

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- 06** The best answers to this question were able to link the religious issues which sparked off the Covenanter revolt with the Crown's financial insecurity and military weakness in the years 1638 to 1640. However, many answers suffered from some or all of the following tendencies. First, a failure to be clear about chronology. There were two Bishops' wars – one in 1639 ending in a truce at Berwick and another in 1640 ending with the Treaty of Ripon. There were also two parliaments in 1640 – one meeting in April 1640, the other in November 1640. Most candidates did not show a firm grasp of these crucial dates and events. Second, a failure to link complaints about Charles's policies in the 1630s with the end of the Personal Rule in 1640. Candidates often referred to Puritan dissatisfaction with Laudianism or gentry annoyance at forest fines and ship money but were unable to explain how these contributed to the abandonment of non-parliamentary rule. There were ways in which this might have been done, e.g. as a partial explanation for the reluctance of the Short Parliament to support Charles I's demands for money and men with which to defeat the Covenanters, or referring to secret collaboration between leaders of the opposition in England and those in Scotland, or reference to the 'taxpayers' strike' in 1639–1640. Third, candidates did not always see that their material could be used to support and challenge the importance of religious factors in the events of 1637–1640. The Scots revolt was certainly ignited by a religious issue but there were also issues of land ownership and nationalism too. Charles's failure to defeat the revolt was due to various factors such as lack of money, trained soldiers and effective military leadership as well as mistakes made by himself and his advisers. Fourth, some candidates became confused between the Scots rebellion of 1638–1640 and the Civil War which broke out in 1642. Several candidates made reference, sometimes at length, to the Irish Rebellion and the Grand Remonstrance in October/November 1641 or to the attempted arrest of the 5 MPs in January 1642, which were really beyond the time scale of this question.

Overall, there were many pleasing responses to the new style examination paper. As always candidates need to know their material well and be able to deploy it effectively. Explicit focus on the question and links to it throughout the answer, precise and accurate evidence to support arguments, and a reasoned conclusion, all help to ensure high marks.

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

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