



**General Certificate of Education
January 2011**

History 1041

Unit HIS1C

Report on the Examination

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Unit HIS1C

Unit 1C: The Reformation in Europe, c1500–1564

General Comments

This paper elicited a wide variety of responses. Many candidates were well-prepared and produced knowledgeable answers which demonstrated clear and relevant understanding. Unfortunately, a minority of candidates was patently under-prepared, appearing to lack both an elementary knowledge of the relevant material and an effective examination technique. It was also disappointing that only a relatively small minority of candidates demonstrated the sharpness to produce crisp and directly focused and supported answers to the twelve-mark questions, which had been such a welcome feature of the summer examination in 2010. Moreover, a substantial minority of candidates did have trouble with timing. More often than not, this was because they produced long and rambling answers to the twelve-mark questions, which resulted in their having to produce truncated answers to the final twenty four-mark question. There was a general issue with some candidates of basic chronology, with Calvin appearing irrelevantly in answers to Questions 01 and 04.

Question 1

- 01** Though this elicited a small proportion of excellent answers, these were outnumbered by the answers which had significant defects. In some cases this seemed to be because candidates had not been taught the radical Reformation and they were therefore conceptually at sea, a problem which also affected answers to Question 02. Some candidates, denied the opportunity by the question paper to write at length about Luther from 1517 to 1521, did so in any case. Such answers, whilst they could gain a small reward for establishing the historical context, were assessed either at Level 1 or at Level 2. Some candidates showed little understanding of the fact that Luther's challenge to the authority of the Catholic Church did much to encourage the emergence of groups and individuals who lacked his social conservatism. Such radicalism first became evident during Luther's confinement in the Wartburg. In the absence of Luther's leadership the more radical figure of Andreas Karlstadt emerged as the driving force of religious reform. There was a growth in millenarianism, exemplified particularly by the Zwickau Prophets. Luther's former follower, Thomas Müntzer, openly challenged the political authority of the Elector of Saxony, and his leadership contributed to the upsurge in peasant activism which culminated in the rebellion of 1524–5. Centres should note that Zwingli was not an Anabaptist, though it was in the interests of his enemies to stigmatise him accordingly.
- 02** This question also elicited a very wide range of responses. Once again, the weakest answers came from candidates who had no conceptual grasp of the radical Reformation, despite the fact that this is an integral part of the specification. On the other hand, well-prepared candidates had little difficulty evaluating the key theme of weak leadership in relation to the other factors which might ultimately have culminated in the failure of radicalism. Some candidates had a very impressive knowledge and understanding of a range of radical leaders, which they were able to apply constructively to the question. A few candidates argued that in certain respects, given the lack of resources available to them, some radical leaders did exhibit significant leadership skills. A few candidates who clearly had a clear conceptual grasp of radicalism let themselves down because of deficiencies in the range of evidence which they offered.

Question 2

- 03** Although the Council of Trent had featured strongly in candidates' responses in previous examinations, this question proved rather difficult. Many candidates were able to assert that Pope Paul III was forced into calling the Council on account of the weakness of the Catholic Church. However, candidates often struggled to develop this further with reference to the specific circumstances of the 1540s. In particular, few candidates had an awareness of the international context, including the pressure from Charles V for Paul to institute a general council.
- 04** Knowledge and understanding of the importance of the 'Renaissance popes' in weakening the Catholic Church proved variable. Some candidates had little or no knowledge of the popes of the period. Others did have some knowledge of individual popes, though this was often patchy. There was some confusion on points of detail. Leo X, for example, was no warrior. Moreover, Adrian VI and Clement VII featured in few answers and only a small number of candidates realised the significance of 1527, the terminal date of the question. Candidates were often on stronger ground when they looked in more general terms at the factors which weakened the Church, such as the impact of Christian humanists and the influence of the reformers. A large proportion of candidates mentioned the importance of Luther to the weakening of the Church, though only a minority made explicit the link between Luther and Pope Leo X, who sanctioned the sale of indulgences which sparked off Luther's revolt against the Church. Descriptions of the career of Luther did not score highly.

Question 3

- 05** Like the other twelve-mark questions, this attracted some disappointing answers. Some of these were chronological accounts of Calvin's work in Geneva, often with emphasis being placed on his years of exile, many years before the foundation of the Academy. Some candidates were able to identify the importance of Calvin's own educational concerns and the need to develop somewhere to train effectively the next generation of reformers and missionaries. The best candidates were able to link this to the political context in Geneva where, by 1559, his sometimes fractious relationship with the Little Council had mellowed.
- 06** On the whole, this question was answered successfully. Most candidates were able to say something worthwhile about Calvin's ideas on church organisation, with appropriate weight in this context being given to the Consistory and the Grabeau as well as the four orders. These were often linked successfully with other reasons for Calvin's success, such as his theology, preaching and political triumphs. Unfortunately, a significant number of otherwise promising answers to this question suffered because candidates ran out of time. In most such cases, the candidates lost more marks from their failure to complete Question 06 than they had gained extra marks from over-writing in their responses to the twelve-mark questions.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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