



**General Certificate of Education
January 2011**

History 1041

Unit HIS2C

Report on the Examination

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Unit HIS2C

Unit 2C: The Reign of Henry IV of France, 1589–1610

General Comments

There were a total of 45 candidates for examination in this unit for the January 2011 series. The vast majority of the candidates answered the required number of questions, although there were a small number of unfinished responses and incomplete examination scripts where only Question 1 and only part of the second question were attempted. Candidates were able to access the sources with skill and apply own knowledge appropriately. There were a few example of paraphrasing in 02 particularly, with a mechanistic approach adopted to the use of the sources. This was evidenced especially in 01 where the need to indicate three differences and at least one similarity with brief links enabled majority of candidates to score relatively highly on this part of Question 1 and consequently on 03 and 05. Responses to the second section: Questions 2 and 3 elicited an almost complete candidate preference for Question 2: 03 and 04. Whilst the majority of the candidates were able to make the distinction between narrative and analysis/evaluation, a number of candidates found prioritisation of factors difficult and therefore lacked a degree of coherence. Few candidates were able to produce supported and sustained final paragraphs which reduced the opportunities to score highly for producing secure judgments. Finally it was pleasing to see that the vast majority of the candidature was able to demonstrate a clear depth of knowledge and apply it appropriately. Whilst this unit has a paucity of student friendly textual information it remains evident that centres are nevertheless well able to prepare their candidates for the demands of the specification and examination.

Question 1

01 This question was based on the need to identify actual differences in the content/argument between Sources A and B in relation to the peasant uprisings of the Croquants in 1593–1594 and with links to own knowledge. The higher levels required the need to identify the extent of difference and similarity between the sources.

Most responses were able to identify “views/differences”, e.g. Source A suggests that expectations of taxation was significant whereas Source B indicates that some leeway was given and taxes in arrears were not to be collected. Another example would be that Source A suggests that serious uprisings were largely confined to the South West, whereas in Source B the indication is that the peasants were assembling in large number everywhere. These two examples clearly reveal differences.

It is also important to show “how far” and that similar views are identified. For example: Source A indicates peasants were prepared to use violence to achieve their goal i.e. “destroying nobility” and in Source B, “they organised for violence”. Similarity could be confirmed by further identification of additional similarities, e.g. both sources agree that taxation was the key to the potential confrontation and that both additionally indicate that rebellions provided a “test fire” for Henry IV’s new government and that direct taxation had a clear limit given the limits of production of the French economy.

To strengthen the answers and reach Levels 3 and 4 some reference to own knowledge was demanded of the Croquant rebel’s motivations and the government response to them

as a significant threat to the regime in the localities and the social inter-relationships particularly over direct taxation; the Taille.

- 02** Assessing importance, as in this question, requires identification of specific issues, an evaluation of issues relevant to both positive and opposing views and a firm conclusion drawn from the preceding discussion.

Candidates were invited to offer judgments by addressing the focus of the question and offering some balance of other factors or views. In “how important” or “how successful” questions, the answer could be, but not exclusively have to be, based on the focus of the question, though this was not evidenced from the work of the candidates who were more than able to extend their responses into a wider context and discussion of additional factors. The expectation was that candidates used both the sources and developed own knowledge to progress beyond Level 2 and into Level 3. There was an expectation that candidates approached the question in a manner which required extrapolation of information and views from the sources and developed own knowledge of the importance of the nobles in enabling Henry IV to establish himself as king by 1598. The vast majority of candidates were able to access levels 3 and above and a small majority accessed top level four and into Level 5 where supported and sustained judgments were rewarded.

There was evidence of the identification and use of information from the sources: Source A identifies the clear friction between the privileges of the nobles and the perceived injustice of the peasants forced to pay direct taxes, Source B maintains the nobles were making excessive demands and were seen as exploiting and manipulating their position to the disadvantage of the peasants, the peasants appeal to the King tested his relationship with his nobility, reflecting badly on his authority. In Source C a view where the nobles are seen to be supporting Henry as king because he is working to maintain order, though increasingly the towns and both rich and poor supported Henry thus strengthening his authority.

Such views needed own knowledge to create the required balanced response. Factors suggesting ways in which the nobles were important could include: they rallied to the support of the crown when needed. Conversely they could oppose the crown and plots were not infrequent. The nobility was well rewarded by Henry who clearly saw the need for royal patronage to increase support for his rule whilst keeping as many nobles tied to him at court rather than living on their lands.

Full balance could be secured through suggesting ways in which the nobles were not important or that other factors were more important, these included: Some nobles were in debt, suffered declining income, value of pensions dropped and were less able to pay for titles and/or positions. Nobles could be excluded from the King’s Council, their traditional power compromised; in fact there were fewer of them. Henry appointed his own lieutenants rather than the nobles to work in the regions and provinces. Greengrass acknowledges them as the “The Long Robe” in his book: *France in the Age of Henry IV*. The “*noblesse de robe*”, were likely to be more loyal and better educated. Ultimately Henry was able to apply sanctions on the nobility with the ultimate punishment reserved for those who opposed him; Biron is a good example.

Good answers above Level 3 were able to demonstrate clear evidence of all three pathways accessing a good balanced, analytical and evaluative response many concluding with a secure judgment to Level 5.

Question 2

- 03** Candidates responded well to this not unfamiliar question. Majorative responses identified and acknowledged the Wars of Religion, the effect of the wars on the economy and social and financial infra-structure of France, the legacy of the spending of Henry III, and the inability of Henry IV to increase taxation and the problem of foreign loans had yet to be resolved, these were the general responses offered whilst some candidates were able to offer more long term reasons for the debt such as: Inflation had reduced the real worth of income from taxation, corruption was endemic amongst financial officers and the cost of providing for the perception of a strong monarchy. Candidates who reached the higher levels were able to show the inter-relationship of the reasons offered. A number of candidates were able to reach higher levels through making links to the effects of war encouraging localised corruption which Henry was not always confident enough to deal more effectively early on in the reign. Answers which offered knowledge and understanding with clear and effective links were able to access the highest levels. There was clear evidence that centres are teaching to the need to identify about three factors, explain them in context assess their relative importance and make links to establish an explicit judgment.
- 04** This question required candidates to make a judgment by balancing evidence which supports the view given against that which does not. There was a real if not wholly convincing attempt to consider balance by challenging the issue of a “Golden Age” from a large minority of candidates with little real depth of evidence, as a consequence of this some candidates failed to achieve beyond top Level 3. A similar number of candidates used the opportunity of the question’s economic nature to write extensively about Sully, which left a proportion of the responses without a direct focus and the means by which a full evaluation could be advanced. Nevertheless, the majority of candidates were able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of a wider range of issues and sought a balanced response with many accessing top Level 3 and certainly beyond and into Level 5 for those providing a clear supported and sustained judgment. Good answers were able to conclude that despite the difficulties, France did begin to make a recovery from the previous very unsettled period. Henry IV supported Sully and was a supporter of conspicuous consumption, both to support industry but also to bolster the monarchy and restore general economic confidence. This included the construction of a Mediterranean fleet and economic trade agreements with the Levant and the Sultan. Similarly new ports were encouraged in the Atlantic trade: St Malo, Brest and La Rochelle, exploiting valuable trade with Spain and consequently becoming major currency earners for France. This was a popular question area which allowed the majority of candidates to access the higher levels in the majorative cases. Whilst there were the generalized and narrative responses of listing Sully’s achievements without full cognizance of the focus of the question or the analytical and evaluative demands of a balanced response; these were very much in the minority.

Question 3

- 05** There were hardly any responses to Question 3 05 and 06 from the candidature of 45. Clearly Foreign Policy was not a popular choice this time around. It seems to reinforce the contention that if there is a choice between most issues set against the opportunity to select Sully there appears to be little contest amongst candidates. It is also worth considering that Foreign Policy could present itself as the compulsory Question One in accordance with the specification and that questions relating to Sully will not unfailingly appear every year.

The attempts to answer this question were various and spread across the levels. Question 05 required the inclusion of a range of reasons as to why the Cleves-Julich affair over a duchy situated between the United Provinces and the Empire was a threat to the French Crown. The focus of the question is explanation rather than description, although some supporting evidence was also necessary to consolidate the response and enable reward at Level 3 and above. Effective linkage between factors were also deserving of reward at the higher levels.

There were a range of factors which offered appropriate explanation, these included: Fear of further Habsburg encirclement of France and the United Provinces following the death of the Duke of Cleves without an obvious heir there was the danger the territory might be annexed by the Empire. Protestant indecision left the border vulnerable and Henry's Council equally remained divided and indecisive with Henry wanting to avoid war. Henry's assassination left the region potentially vulnerable. The affair revealed the degree of rivalry which existed between France and the Empire although both as a consequence of religious war were not really in a position engage in conflict. Spain disliked Henry's support for the German Protestant Princes and their loans which had contributed to his accession. He was seen as a "protector". Spain saw the affair as an opportunity to create difficulties for Henry IV whose conversion was never fully accepted and whose emerging strong France "next door" was seen as threatening. A resolution to the affair involved a French invasion but Henry was assassinated before it could take place though it was later resolved through compromise.

To reach the higher levels candidates needed to show the inter-relationship of the reasons given.

- 06** This question was designed to allow candidates to make a judgment by balancing points which agree/disagree with the view that the Treaty of Vervins brought an end to conflict. The key word is "Successfully".

There was an expected balance: Factors which agree might include: France received territory from the Treaty of Vervins such as Calais, Toul, Metz and Amiens; these were all territories which bordered the Empire and consequently strengthened France's borders. Henry's "*Grand Design*" was aimed at supporting the Protestant cause in Europe was intended to counterbalance the threat from Spain and Catholicism and to prevent war. This was achieved. Henry's own conversion and support of Catholicism had gone a long way to already resolving the religious conflict with Spain before 1598, the Treaty helped to confirm this. Further all French frontier provinces were mapped and strengthened against future possible invasion; fortresses were constructed and supplied all this work came under the umbrella of Sully. Conversely there are a number of factor which disagree these could include: France remained surrounded by Spain and Spanish held territory. The Empire had strong links to Spain through the former HRE Charles V and Ferdinand; Philip's uncle. Further conflict with Spain can be acknowledged in the Biron Revolt, Henry's interference in the Moorish/Morisco communities in Spain and Henry's willingness to challenge Spain on a number of occasions: Savoy (1601), Cleves-Julich (1609–1610). Henry provocatively was seen to challenge Spanish naval power with the construction of a fleet at Toulon in the Mediterranean.

The best answer was able to conclude that although open conflict was much reduced, suspicion remained and both states remained guarded in their actions a kind of modern "*Cold War*". Arguably neither side actually wanted war especially after the death of Philip II. The most dangerous period had already passed by 1598 with the capture of Amiens in

1597. The weaker responses tended to give a narrative description with only brief links and largely unsupported statements lacking development.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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