



**General Certificate of Education  
June 2011**

**History 1041**

**Unit HIS2J**

***Report on the Examination***

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# Unit HIS2J

## Unit 2J: Britain and Appeasement, 1919–1940

### General Comments

The question paper proved to be accessible for the majority of candidates. All scripts were marked according to the mark scheme. All candidates attempted the compulsory source questions (questions 01 and 02). More candidates attempted the Question 3 (05 and 06) than Question 2 (03 and 04).

The quality of written communication was generally good but many candidates struggled with spelling words such as Britain and Czechoslovakia.

### Question 1

- 01** This was the 12 mark compulsory source question. On the whole candidates answered this question well and managed to state differences and similarities between the two sources. Those candidates that obtained the lowest marks paraphrased the two sources and gave little comment on the differences between the sources. Some candidates either only identified similarities or differences this meant that they were awarded Level 2. Candidates that were awarded Level 3 either identified similarities and differences or identified one of the two and used their own knowledge. Those candidates who were awarded Level 4 identified similarities and differences and used contextual own knowledge. This included knowledge on the Munich conference, and most commonly the differing attitudes to Chamberlain at the time of the Munich agreement.
- 02** The most common error with this question was that candidates did not use the sources to answer the question. This meant that they could gain no higher than a Level 2. Conversely many weaker candidates based their answer purely on the sources and in many cases did not focus their answer on the question. Many candidates who used the sources did not use all three of the sources and this should be encouraged, particularly the use of Source C. The question was well answered on the whole and many candidates were able to offer a balanced answer on the issue of whether the Munich pact was the only realistic policy that Britain could follow. Candidates at Level 3 usually prepared a balanced argument but their answers lacked depth and explanation of the factors they used to support their answer. Those candidates at level 4 and 5 drew on an impressive range of evidence to challenge the interpretation. Many used opinions of historians and contemporaries to support their answer. Some candidates generalised the question and wrote an answer that considered whether appeasement was the only realistic policy and not the Munich Pact.

### Question 2

- 03** This question was not answered as well as 05 and proved to be less popular. Most candidates could come up with two reasons why Britain joined the League of Nations and this meant that they were awarded a Level 2. Some candidates started to write about the success of the League of Nations, which did not answer the question. Those candidates who were awarded the higher marks successful, wrote about factors such as collective security, the avoidance of war and support for the Treaty of Versailles. Candidates at

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Level 4 were able to make a link between these factors – this was mainly done in terms of importance and ranking the factors.

- 04** On the whole this question was answered less well than others on the paper. Many candidates failed to address the date range of 1925–1935. Many students went outside of the date range and began to talk about events in 1936. Some candidates either addressed mainly the 1920s or the 1930s. This question also tended to produce one-sided arguments agreeing that Britain took the lead in promoting international peace. This meant that they were awarded a Level 3. Many candidates attempted a balanced argument but mainly listed the events of 1925 to 1935 with limited comment that linked it to the question this resulted in them being awarded a Level 2 or Level 3. Better candidates assessed the events in detail and explained whether it showed Britain had taken the lead in promoting international peace. (Level 4). Those candidates at Level 5 managed to come to supported conclusions as to the extent of Britain’s involvement in promoting peace. Many candidates appeared to have run out of time by the time they got to this question and therefore answers were general and sometimes unfinished.

### **Question 3**

- 05** This question was popular and on the whole well answered. Candidates found it easy to give reasons as to why Britain did not act when Germany remilitarised the Rhineland and this meant that some candidates created lists with little supporting evidence which was awarded low Level 3 at the maximum. Most candidates found it easy to identify three reasons and to explain them in detail. (Level 3). There was lots of reference to historians and contemporaries opinions and Lord Lothian was quoted on many occasions. Those candidates who were awarded Level 4 used a variety of methods to link the factors. Some candidates ranked the courses, others divided the factors into long term and short-term reasons, and some grouped factors into economic, military and political reasons.
- 06** This question was answered better than 04. Candidates were able to use factors that both supported and disagreed with the interpretation that Britain’s response to the invasion of Abyssinia was weak. Some candidates lost the question throughout their answer and wrote about everything that Britain did in response to the invasion of Abyssinia. (Level 2) Many candidates struggled with the Hoare Laval Pact and it was clear that many did not have a firm understanding of this. Those candidates at Level 3 tended to write a one sided argument with varying degrees of depth and range. Those at Levels 4 and 5 wrote balanced arguments and used evidence well to support their answers. There was a range of judgements at Level 5 with some interesting and intelligent conclusions drawn. Historical interpretation was used less well in this question as it had been in 04 and 02. The best answers looked at why Britain’s response was weak and how there was little choice but to act in this method if Britain were to retain Italian friendship.

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

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