



## **General Certificate of Education**

# **History 1041**

## *Specification*

### **Unit HIS1A**

# **Report on the Examination**

## *2009 examination – January series*

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# *Unit HIS1A*

## **Unit 1A: The Crusading Movement and the Latin East, 1095–1204**

### **Comments from the Chief Examiner: Unit 1**

In this examination session some issues generic to all the Unit 1 papers were noted:

- Candidates are required to answer two questions from a choice of three, each consisting of a part (a) and a part (b), i.e. 4 sub-questions in total. Whether due to timing issues or to a misunderstanding of the rubric, a few candidates either answered all six sub-questions or answered only one question. The format of Unit 1 papers is significantly different from AQA's legacy units, so it is vital that all candidates are aware in advance of what they will be required to do.
- Timing issues caused other problems too. This is a one hour 15 minute paper, thus allowing roughly 12 minutes in which to complete the (a) questions and 25 minutes for the (b) questions. A number of candidates failed to complete the paper and in addition to those who attempted only one question, there were others who missed out a part-question or lapsed into notes. Selecting relevant material and maintaining a strong focus on the question is part of the skill being tested in this examination and candidates need to realise that they will penalise themselves heavily if they fail to tackle the two questions required, in full. Furthermore, since they are asked to write in continuous prose – which is the only way any sense of argument can be conveyed – notes will never score highly.
- It was clear from some scripts that candidates had not studied, or revised, the full specification content for their chosen alternative. It must be emphasised that the three questions may be drawn from any part of that content. Without a secure understanding of the complete content, candidates will find it extremely difficult to perform well.

### **Report from the Principal Examiner**

#### **General Comments**

Although this was the first examination in the new AQA AS History specifications, the candidates did not seem to encounter difficulties with the new format, question stems or timing. Indeed, most responses were focused, balanced and detailed, showing an interest and understanding of crusading history that reflects well on their teachers and their own enthusiasm for this alternative. The large number of candidates sitting this paper and the quality of their work was most pleasing,

#### **Question 1**

- (a) In answering this question candidates were expected to provide a range of specific explanations regarding the inability of the Seljuk Turks to resist the First Crusade. Most were able to provide useful context on the divisions and weaknesses within the Muslim world at this time, and many were able to relate these weaknesses to the events of 1096 to 1099, giving a series of reasons. For example, linkage to the issue through analysis of the events in Anatolia regarding the failure of Kiliç Arslan at Nicaea and Dorylaeum, and the defeat of Kerbogha of Mosul at Antioch. Many candidates contrasted Muslim disunity

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with the commitment, organisation and military leadership of the crusaders. Most candidates achieved Level 3 by providing a range of relevant explanations backed by appropriately selected information, while some also prioritized their analysis and reached a clear conclusion.

- (b) This question regarding the various motives of participants in the First Crusade troubled some candidates; some wished to discuss the motives of Pope Urban II in calling the crusade, while others wished to analyse the reasons for the success of the crusade. Most candidates, however, were able to give a detailed analysis of spiritual motivation with explicit understanding of issues such as the indulgence, remission of sins, the crusade as a penitential pilgrimage, the importance and lure of Jerusalem and the Holy places, the Holy Sepulchre in particular. Many candidates expanded upon issues of Holy War and the knightly dilemma. Many candidates were also able to appreciate a range of other issues, such as greed and land-hunger, knightly status and feudal values. The best candidates were able to relate these issues to specific individual participants such as Bohemond of Taranto, or to key episodes during the crusade, such as the finding of the Holy Lance at Antioch.

### **Question 2**

- (a) Question 2 was also a popular choice amongst candidates, although responses were less secure compared to Question 1(a). In particular many responses failed to link their analysis to the fall of Jerusalem in 1187, stopping, at best, at the battle of Hattin, leaving this key issue implicit. Also, there was often weakness in the organisation of material. Most were able to develop upon a series of reasons for the weakness of the Kingdom of Jerusalem. The best answers prioritised such issues into long-term and short-term, and provided a precise focus. The rise, resources and skill of Saladin was well understood by most candidates, as was the internal divisions within Jerusalem's leadership: King Baldwin IV and King Guy were seen as major causes of collapse.
- (b) Essay writing skill in this part-question was less secure than in answers to Question 1(b). In particular, the issues of success/failure were often dealt with in list fashion. Candidates must be made aware that balance across a range of evidence and varying historical interpretations should be more than 'I agree/I disagree'. Again, weaker responses simply concentrated on reasons for failure rather than expanding upon the outcome of the crusade in 1192 compared to its original aims. The intentions of participants were well-developed by more able candidates, as was the contrast between the position in 1188 and 1193. Again, one issue which linked aims and outcome which was noteworthy in better responses was the issue of the throne of Jerusalem and the need for an acceptable candidate. These responses looked beyond the Guy-Richard/Conrad-Philip rivalry as a simplistic 'reason for failure' and actually expanded on the role of Count Henry of Champagne.

### **Question 3**

- (a) This question proved the least popular and was not well done. Part (a) asked candidates to provide a series of relevant explanations regarding hostility between Byzantium and the West. Some candidates were able to provide long-term reasons for mistrust, including religious tension dating back to 1054 and the events of the First Crusade, especially regarding the behaviour of Emperor Alexius and Bohemond. Again, some reference was made to Emperor Manuel and the failure of the Second Crusade, but this usually lacked depth and precision. Most noteworthy, however, was the lack of understanding on more recent tensions from c1170 onwards, for example during the Third Crusade, or in relations between Byzantium and the western maritime states.
- (b) This part (b) essay question asked candidates to evaluate the role of the Venetians in the failure of Fourth Crusade. Some candidates were able to do so, analysing the role of Venice and the Doge in the diversion, and expanding upon alternative causes, such as the over-estimate of numbers, and the roles of Boniface of Montferrat, Philip of Swabia and young Alexius. A few candidates were not accepting of Venetian blame and gave good evaluation through the role and commitment of the city.

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

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.