



## **General Certificate of Education**

# **History 1041**

## *Specification*

### **Unit HIS2B**

# **Report on the Examination**

## *2009 examination – January series*

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## *Unit HIS2B*

### **Unit 2B: The Church in England: The Struggle for Supremacy, 1529–1547**

#### **Comments from the Chief Examiner: Unit 2**

In this examination session some issues generic to all the Unit 2 papers were noted:

- In the compulsory source question, 1(b), some candidates failed to use both the sources and their own knowledge in responding to the question. Candidates must be reminded that unless they refer to the sources, by explicit comment on detail or views, paraphrasing or direct quotation (or if they use the sources only and show no additional knowledge), their mark will be limited to a maximum of the top of Level 2.
- Although there were fewer problems of timing than in Unit 1, some candidates clearly spent considerably longer than 15 minutes on the (a) questions and 30 minutes on the (b) questions, and consequently failed to complete their final answer. They should be reminded that even a couple of focused paragraphs could enable them to reach a Level 2 mark, whereas a string of notes would be unlikely to show skills above Level 1.
- It was clear from some scripts that candidates were not familiar with the complete content requirements for their alternative. Candidates must be reminded that they need to revise all of the content of these ‘depth’ units, particularly since this paper features one compulsory question which can be drawn from any part of the specification content, as can the remaining two questions, from which they have to choose one.

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

##### **General Comments**

The quality of the scripts seen in this first series of the new specification was high. Despite the fact that students had only a short period in which to develop from GCSE the quality of the responses was similar to those seen on the legacy specification. Candidates were able to deploy their knowledge and demonstrated good historical skills in source analysis and in constructing evaluative and balanced analysis. Whilst the assessment criteria ask for a knowledge of different arguments, the majority of the scripts went considerably beyond what was required in using historians’ arguments very effectively.

##### **Question 1**

- (a) There were a significant number of good responses to this question in which candidates examined areas of agreement, areas of disagreement, used their own knowledge and came to a conclusion as to how far the views in Source A differed from those in Source B. Amongst these were candidates who had written these elements as an aide memoire before they started writing which helped them to keep on track. There were only a few cases where candidates failed to understand the meaning of the sources; the weakest responses came from those who either saw the question as an opportunity to posit their own argument about the causes of the Pilgrimage or those who chose to test out the sufficiency of the two sources against their own knowledge. The best candidates focused on the aims of those who led the Pilgrimage of Grace, as opposed to the causes. These examined the degree to which two sources, one a contemporary list of demands and the

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other an analysis of the aims by a modern historian, agreed. Religion and poor government were obvious in both, economic issues were overt in Source B and implicit in Source A (point 4 – although explicit in the Pontefract Articles from own knowledge). The issue of a rising to overthrow the King was, understandably, only dealt with in Source B.

- (b) The responses to this question were also encouraging with the majority of the candidates remembering to use all the sources and their own knowledge. A number of the responses were predominantly one-sided, only looking at the evidence which suggested that it wasn't an attempt to overthrow the King. The better responses looked at both sides. There was direct evidence in Source B that it was a rising to overthrow the King, candidates also used their own knowledge of the comparative military strengths of the King's and the rebel forces. Some use was also made of the challenge to the King through the desire to have the Lady Mary made legitimate. This was balanced with the belief that most of the Pilgrims did not intend to challenge the King directly, but only his advisors. Some candidates did consider the social composition of the rebels in their analysis. It was encouraging to see well-structured responses which attempted to make a series of points and come to an overarching conclusion.

### **Question 2**

- (a) The vast majority of candidates attempted Question 2 and were very knowledgeable about the reasons why Henry wanted to end his marriage to Catherine in 1529. Not only were the responses well-developed, but they were well-supported by precise and extensive supporting evidence. Four main reasons were articulated: the desire for a male heir and Catherine's inability to produce any more children; his belief that he had gone against the will of God; his lust for Anne Boleyn; and the lack of necessity to maintain diplomatic links with Spain. Most encouragingly the majority of candidates prioritised the reasons and showed the links between them. Although it is not necessary at AS Level, in responses to this question candidates were able to balance the interpretations of historians, most notably Starkey and Bernard.
- (b) Candidates were less sure-footed in response to part (b) of this question. A number of responses only considered Anne Boleyn in the context of the attraction she held for Henry and her determination to become Queen to provide the male heir. In some cases this argument was re-stated in different ways. Other responses re-hashed what had been written in part (a). As in the previous specification, candidates should be aware that they will not be asked to use the same analysis twice. Whilst only a minority of responses considered Anne Boleyn's links with reformist theology and the opportunities presented by Simon Fish and Tyndale, there were convincing considerations of the contributions made by Cranmer, Cromwell and even Henry himself. It was encouraging to read real attempts at constructing an evaluation of these contributions, even where candidates were struggling to offer an assessment. Generally the supporting evidence was well selected, if less detailed than in response to (a). There was also awareness of the historical debate.

### **Question 3**

- (a) Only a small number of candidates attempted this question and it was less well done than Question 2. In response to this question candidates tended to focus on the broad issues involved in the reduction of the power of Rome rather than considering the specific and cumulative purposes of the individual Acts. Whilst the larger issues, such as those which restricted the power of the clergy in relation to the King were known, and the Act in Restraint of Appeals was written about, the process and uncertainties seemed less secure. To some the Break with Rome was a done deal. Candidates were also keen to write about the influence of anti-clericalism and new religious ideas, although these were

not always linked to the question. Candidates should always try to use their knowledge and understanding to explain why.

- (b) This question was not really very well done by the small number who attempted it. Part (b) questions require candidates to construct an argument which has balance and uses specific evidence in support. Part (b) questions also require candidates to consider a broader question over a longer time period than the specific focuses of part (a). The responses to this question tended to consider not whether Henry became dependent on Parliament rather than using Parliament as a mechanism to achieve greater power, but to consider whether Henry actually became dependent on some-one else, for example Cromwell. Clearly the assessment of the responses is distorted by the small number attempting this question, but this question was rooted in the historical debate which originated in Elton's revolution in government rather than the debate as to who was responsible for the direction of policy – King or Minister?

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

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