



General Certificate of Education

History 1041

Specification

Unit HIS2H

Report on the Examination

2009 examination – January series

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Unit HIS2H

Unit 2H: Britain, 1902–1918: The Impact of New Liberalism

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

There were a number of impressive examples not only of candidate knowledge but also well-developed understanding. These were often accompanied with sound examination technique. The overall performance of candidates in this examination was good with very few displaying a lack of preparedness. Candidates appeared to manage their time effectively and the great majority seemed to have spent some time planning their responses rather than launching into badly constructed responses. Many answers displayed a genuine attempt to address the analytical demands of the questions and there were relatively few responses which were driven entirely by narrative and descriptive detail. Examiners reported no examples of rubric infringement. Overall, subject knowledge was good and many answers displayed sound levels of contextual knowledge and understanding.

Question 1

- (a) There were relatively few examples of answers which merely paraphrased or directly described the content of the sources and thereby made little or only passing reference to the explanatory focus of the question. There were some responses that adopted this approach and were rewarded accordingly. Many candidates not only revealed a sound working knowledge of the relevant subject content but were also able to place the key issue in the wider context of Liberal welfare reform. A significant number of answers developed a balanced response in that they were able to identify both differences and

similarities. Those candidates who were able to refer to similarities implicitly were rewarded for their understanding and focus.

- (b) The great majority of responses displayed the candidates' ability to address the question as it was set. Few candidates merely focused on the sources without any indication of their own knowledge. There were even fewer examples of candidates who largely ignored the sources and relied entirely on their own knowledge. Some responses were underdeveloped and lacked depth and balance. Those answers that addressed the focus of the question and moved towards a balanced commentary on the degree of success which the Liberals achieved in their efforts to promote the welfare of children, workers and the elderly were rewarded according to the extent of the explicit understanding evident in the responses. There were some excellent examples of focused and sustained understanding underpinned with well-selected evidential detail.

Question 2

- (a) A large number of candidates displayed a sound working knowledge of the suffrage movement. Although some candidates adopted a rather narrow range of reasons and sometimes failed to develop explanatory material, many others were able to establish not only a wide range of reasons but also detailed explanatory comments. The most effective answers were those that were able to link the factors and thereby produce a well-integrated commentary with well-developed detail. Relatively few candidates resorted to a simple descriptive focus based on the nature of suffragette militancy. There were some well-developed answers which explored the influence of the Pankhursts and the wider political context which influenced their decisions.
- (b) There was clear evidence that many candidates had been well-prepared to address the need to produce balanced responses to this type of question. Many candidates were able to consider the contribution women made to the war effort and balance it against other factors which also influenced the final outcome for women in 1918. The abandonment of militancy figured largely in many answers as did the shifting political priorities of Britain's political leaders. Despite this quality, there were examples of responses which suggested that candidates were more comfortable with descriptive detail addressing the nature of female war work, particularly that in munitions production. Such responses were unable to progress far through the generic level descriptors.

Question 3

- (a) Candidate knowledge and understanding was generally good on this topic. A significant number of candidates were able to explain and develop the idea of a world war and link this to increased state control up to 1916. Particular emphasis was given to Lloyd George and his role as Minister of Munitions. Some candidates adopted a chronological approach and considered how the scale of state control over society developed between 1914 and 1916, culminating in the introduction of military conscription. Although some candidates produced a rather limited range of factors, the majority were able to display a sound knowledge base which led to the development of a wide range of reasons although this sometimes emerged as a list. The best responses were those that not only had range but also made connections and links between the reasons. There were a pleasing number of such well-developed responses.
- (b) It was apparent that many candidates had a sound working knowledge of the key political players between 1915 and 1918. Not only were candidates able to consider Lloyd George's role in the decline of the Liberals but also that of Asquith. Some well-balanced and detailed commentaries were offered which displayed genuine understanding of the factors which divided the Liberal movement during the war. Some perceptive comments were recorded on the impact of the war of Liberalism and the practical outcomes of this for party unity. Relatively few answers narrowly focused on Lloyd George. It was clear that the majority of candidates were prepared to address the key instruction in the question although there were some who adopted a mainly descriptive or narrative position.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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