



## **General Certificate of Education**

# **History 1041**

## *Specification*

### **Unit HIS2B**

# **Report on the Examination**

## *2009 examination – June series*

**This Report on the Examination uses the [new numbering system](#)**

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## *Unit HIS2B*

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

#### **General Comments**

The paper produced a wide range of responses, including some exceptionally well-informed and clearly structured answers. The majority of centres had welcomed the guidance on the issue of historians' views and had advised their candidates to use the views of historians only when appropriate. Only in a relatively small number of cases were the views of historians included regardless of whether they enhanced the students' own arguments. Students should be advised to avoid excessive crossings out, insertions and directive arrows. It is worth spending a couple of minutes planning a response, rather than cause frustration for the examiner who is desperately trying to follow an argument back and forth (and up and down) across a number of pages. Often these scripts were from potentially very able candidates who knew a great deal and were keen to include everything they had learned. There was also a noticeable problem with the spelling of what should be everyday words; it is also not acceptable to write Henry VIII and to forgo basic punctuation.

In terms of the balance of answers, almost twice as many followed their answer to the compulsory question one by answering Question 2 as answered Question 3.

#### **Question 1**

##### **Question 01**

As in the January examinations, there were a number of students who were systematic in their response to this question and ensured that they identified similarities between the sources, wrote about the differences, integrated own knowledge and made an assessment of how far the sources agreed. Unfortunately there were a significant number who did not directly compare the sources; rather they compared the sources with their own knowledge. A considerable number of these students were exceptionally well-informed and went on to achieve highly in other questions. Most candidates had little problem in understanding the sources and were able to support their comparisons with quotes or paraphrase of the material in the sources. Candidates do need to be clear that they must use the material to support a comparison; it is not necessary to paraphrase the sources as a precursor to making a comparison.

The provenance of the sources was made relevant by many candidates but it must be used to illustrate how far the views differ rather than simply being presented. Some students were also content with stating that Fish was biased (incidentally, the range of 'alternative' spellings of biased surpassed previous experience). There were a number who continued the learned response to the point where they were stating that Source A was less useful than Source B as it was a secondary compared to a primary source.

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**Question 02**

The responses to this question reflected a wide range of abilities. Not all candidates did themselves justice in focusing on the question, believing that it was an opportunity to write about the divorce rather than the legislation which established the Royal Supremacy. A small number of candidates eschewed the sources entirely, electing to use prepared historians' arguments instead; ironically some even quoted Bernard, but not the source which was on the paper in front of them.

The best answers explored the influences on the specific legislation passed by Parliament. They considered this in detail, looking at how Henry first tried to pressure the Pope into granting the annulment and then used the legislation to prevent Catherine appealing to Rome and finally to establishing his own power and authority in the Royal Supremacy. A small number of candidates went beyond this legislation to discuss the dissolution of the monasteries, which was the focus of Question 2. There was much useful discussion of Henry's religious beliefs and a serious consideration of the influence of Simon Fish on Henry's attitudes. The general use made of Sources A and B was to suggest a climate of anti-clericalism but with little real demand for the Break with Rome. Very few candidates linked criticisms of the Catholic Church with pressure in Parliament, particularly in light of the discussion about clerical fees in 1529. A significant number were able to discuss the influence of Cromwell, who was regarded as placing a great deal of pressure for religious change.

**Question 2****Question 03**

There were some well structured answers to this which considered three reasons for the dissolution of the larger monasteries in the late 1530s, developed these reasons with supporting detail, provided a link between them and suggested which was the most important. Unfortunately there were a large number of responses which failed to confine the discussion to the larger monasteries, or even to the late 1530s. A general account of the dissolution of the monasteries was rewarded as appropriate, but clearly not to the extent that some might have hoped. The good responses focused on Henry's fear of a Catholic Crusade and the need to increase his resources to pay for the defence of the south coast (and the eventual ambition to invade France). Such answers also looked at the potential opposition presented by monks whose loyalty was divided; the significance of the monastic cause in the Pilgrimage of Grace, the need to reward the nobility and the consolidation of royal supremacy through the removal of the Abbots from the House of Lords. It was clearly possible to write at great length but most were able to confine themselves to what could be achieved in 15 minutes and reward was given to focused, tightly written responses.

**Question 04**

Candidates also knew a considerable amount about the consequences of the dissolution of the monasteries, although some clearly thought that this was really the Pilgrimage of Grace question which had been on the paper in January. Whilst the Pilgrimage of Grace was relevant, it was not the only consequence, nor could much be achieved by suggesting that Darcy and Hussey gained greater power through their actions. The emphasis on power of the nobility proved quite difficult for some and the responses were marked sympathetically as a result. Candidates were able to write about influence in the localities and also political power in a House of Lords deprived of the presence of Abbots. Only a small number stated the reasons for the dissolution which had been covered in the first part of the question (Question 03).

There were some well-balanced answers which argued convincingly that the nobility were not the main beneficiaries of the dissolution, rather this was the gentry, or in some cases, Henry himself. The grasp of this debate was encouraging and the majority went on to consider the

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social and economic impact of the dissolution, in particular focusing on the problems experienced by monks and nuns. The concept of celibacy was not always well understood. As already mentioned, the Pilgrimage of Grace was considered as was the cultural vandalism of the destruction of buildings and books. The really good answers demonstrated control in terms of argument and detail. These were most likely to make a distinction between the most important consequence in the short term and the most important in the longer term. In many respects it is better to give thought to a targeted response rather than the scattergun response of writing everything covered in class or in revision.

### **Question 3**

#### **Question 05**

Whilst Question 3 was attempted by a smaller number of candidates, the responses were generally better. Candidates were able to locate the Cleves marriage in terms of Henry's relationships with other major powers, particularly in terms of the Truce of Nice/Treaty of Toledo and the fear of a Catholic crusade. Most candidates were able to develop this effectively. Very few considered the need for another male heir, which was clearly significant to Henry. There was confusion about the religious position of Cleves, few were aware that Cleves had broken from Rome in the same way as England but, like England, was not Protestant. They did not show that Cleves had, like England made overtures to the Schmalkaldic League but was not a member. Additionally, they suggested, erroneously, that Cleves was led by the Duke of Cleves – Anne's father rather than her brother. Where candidates misunderstood these things but made valid overarching points, a degree of generosity was shown. Many were able to demonstrate the influence of Cromwell, although the significance of the failure of the marriage for his downfall, or Holbein's misleading portrayal of Anne were not directly relevant. The central issue in this was England's vulnerability having broken with Rome and having alienated its traditional ally – The Holy Roman Empire. The key to achieving a level four mark is to structure a response which identifies and links the reasons for the event and to suggest which is the most important.

#### **Question 06**

This question was constructed to enable candidates to present a balanced argument through the 'complete' failure. The majority of candidates were able to identify the ways in which both the Scottish campaign and the French had some success if, overall, they were failures. The victory at Solway Moss and the capture of Boulogne were seen as achievements by contemporaries. Really good candidates stressed the short term/long term issues and some compared the views of contemporaries to those of historians. The chivalric success, indeed the invasion of the traditional enemy played exceptionally well with the nobility. There were some very detailed narrative accounts and only a few where candidates knew very little. To access the higher levels, a response must be balanced in terms of not just looking at one side of the issue, rather than an equal consideration of both sides. No-one could suggest that Henry VIII's foreign policy in the 1540s was in every respect a failure, or in every respect successful. A balance of consideration, if not detail must be attempted.

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

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