



General Certificate of Education

History 1041

Specification

Unit HIS1A

Report on the Examination

2010 examination – January series

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Unit HIS1A

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

General Comments

Candidates' performance in this new alternative continued to impress, in a similar fashion to previous papers. The questions appear to have been accessible, allowing the candidates to produce work of some quality; their detailed and well-argued responses were clearly the product of sustained effort and interest. The quality of responses also varied considerably, with marks awarded across the range. A key issue for weaker responses was the fact that two of the three questions were drawn from the last two decades of the specification. It was clear from some scripts that candidates had not studied, or revised, the full specification content for this alternative. It must be emphasised that the three questions may be drawn from any part of the period. Without a secure understanding of the complete content, candidates will find it extremely difficult to perform well. Most students had a clear understanding of the structure of the examination and answered two questions. Question 1 was answered by almost all the candidates, while almost as many answered Question 2 – few attempted Question 3 on the Fourth Crusade. Timing was an issue for some candidates with too much time devoted to one question at the expense of their second.

Question 1

- (a) This was the best answered of the three (a) questions. With most candidates achieving at least a Level 3 response. In this 12 mark question the candidates were expected to analyse the different reasons why knights went on the First Crusade. Most candidates demonstrated good understanding of the demands of the question and expanded upon issues such as the religious, social and economic motives of knights, including the lure of Jerusalem and the role of the papal indulgence, as well as greed and land hunger. Most were able to give specific examples such as Bohemond of Taranto or Robert of Normandy. Sophisticated understanding was shown on social and feudal issues such as the knightly ethos. At their best, candidates were able to achieve the highest marks by prioritising reasons, for example, the debate over the role of landless younger sons. Weaker candidates provided very generalised responses with limited or inaccurate historical detail and in particular ignored the focus on knights.
- (b) This essay question was well-answered, with candidates providing a useful range of factors which contributed to the success of the First Crusade. One general weakness was illustrated in many of the specific paragraphs on the key issue of Byzantine help, weaker candidates tended to describe the role of Alexius in Pope Urban's decision to call the crusade, rather than analysing the impact of Byzantine help during the actual crusade; this was a question about reasons for success. More able responses expanded upon the impact of Byzantine help at key points, such as the siege of Nicaea and the crossing of Anatolia. Again, stronger candidates referred to the impact of alternative issues such as military skill or Muslim disunity by analysing particular events such as the siege of Antioch rather than simply making generalised assertions. Many candidates produced balanced arguments with precisely selected evidence and were rewarded for doing so.

Question 2

- (a) Some students found this 12 mark question on the impact of the death of King Baldwin IV on the leadership of the Crusader states very challenging. Answers tended to ignore the key date of 1185, and simply provided a descriptive narrative on the Crusader states in the 1180s. Able candidates clearly identifying three to four issues; the way in which the disputed succession deepened divisions within the leadership, divisions over the regency of King Baldwin V, the heightened antagonism between Raymond of Tripoli and Guy of Lusignan, and lack of strong kingship and policy disputes. Better candidates were able to prioritise between issues, stressing long-term context and more immediate issues promoting division.
- (b) The decision to combine a part (a) question on the Crusader states with a part (b) on the Third Crusade, even though the two events were closely related in time, proved challenging for some candidates. The combination of Richard's aims and the achieved outcomes of the Crusade also proved complex for less able candidates. Some candidates chose to ignore the issue of aims however, and simply focused on reasons for success/failure and lost marks for doing so.

Question 3

- (a) Answers to this question on the role of the young Alexius in the diversion of the Fourth Crusade were among the strongest and weakest on the paper. The key issue was one of lack of historical knowledge. For some indication of the type of detailed analysis provided by more able candidates please consult the mark scheme which gives a range of issues such as the Hagenau plot, the meeting at Zara, Alexius's promises of aid to the crusaders, and his failure to meet his promises once he was installed in power. Do note that the detailed mark scheme is given as an indication of some of the material candidates could put forward; it is not an indication of what they must provide, either in range or depth.
- (b) Question 3 attracted few candidates, reflecting its position at the end of the specification. However, a few centres do study this topic in some depth and their candidates produced detailed and wide-ranging analysis. In this 24 mark essay question candidates were asked to evaluate the different reasons for the failure of the Fourth Crusade, especially the role played by greed. AQA's published mark scheme gives some idea of the issues they analysed, including the motives of Venice, the crusaders and Byzantines, as well as other issues such as the treaty of 1201 and historiographical argument and interpretation. The best responses were impressive Level 5 answers and were a pleasure to read.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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