



## **General Certificate of Education**

# **History 1041**

## *Specification*

### **Unit HIS2C**

# **Report on the Examination**

## *2010 examination – January series*

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# Unit HIS2C

## Unit 2C: The Reign of Henry IV of France, 1589–1610

### General Comments

A total of 66 candidates entered for this option. All candidates answered the required number of questions i.e. the compulsory Question 1 and one other. Only one candidate omitted to make effective reference to the sources for Question 1. Question 2 was the more frequent choice for the optional question suggesting a preference for religious issues rather than those of finance. Overall, candidates answered part (a) questions well, many achieving marks in the range of 9 to 12. Responses to part (b) questions were spread more widely but more than a third of answers were assessed as being particularly strong. For those who did less well, the issues centred mainly around a lack of understanding regarding the difference between description and analysis/explanation, but also the ability to support their arguments in adequate depth and range.

### Question 1

- (a) This question depended entirely on identifying the actual differences in the content/argument between Sources A and B, based on the context of Henry IV's restoration of royal authority with some linkage to own knowledge. The next stage was to identify the degree of difference between the sources i.e. to what extent they were similar and to what extent they were different.

Most responses were able to identify 'views/differences', e.g. Source A suggests that the support of the capital would be vital for the recently converted Huguenot Henry to be able to gain support from a mainly Catholic France, whereas Source B indicates that 'relations with the towns', which might include the capital, was the most significant factor. Another example would be that Source A suggests Henry was persuasive in his methods, whereas Source B indicates that he was generally more aggressive; for instance he initially preferred to rule by edict. These two examples clearly highlight differences.

It was also important that similar views were noted. A good number of responses took up the issue of the use of the 'carrot rather than the stick' in Source A, where Henry is noted as offering bribes and rewards to those who supported him. Similarity could be confirmed by reference to Source B that Henry did 'confirm privileges'.

To strengthen the answers and reach Levels 3 and 4, some reference to own knowledge was useful. For example, the fact that Henry converted and gained Paris was important in enabling his coronation and allowed him to make a truce with the League. In addition, the issue of bribery could be confirmed by reference, for example, to money given to, e.g. the Duke of Lorraine to encourage his support of Henry as King.

- (b) Assessing importance, as in this question, requires identification of specific issues, an evaluation of issues relevant to both positive and opposing views, and a firm conclusion drawn from the preceding discussion; unfortunately, weaker responses tended to describe the situation rather than explain and assess, e.g. simply noting that towns were 'the key' to Henry's success, or considering the ways in which Henry increased his control of the towns. This latter approach has some implicit value but also needed more explanation

than candidates who took this approach tended to offer. Towns, as centres of population, were significant financially and economically; they were also defined by their religious stance and often, their allegiance to the local nobility rather than to central government and the king.

All answers but one, drew some information from the sources, e.g. that Source A emphasises the importance of Paris and the support it gave to Henry; own knowledge could develop this with reference to the city as the capital and the seat of government. Source B was also identified as further consolidating importance by reference to initial positive action of town councils to confirm privileges, the control exercised by Henry regarding significant appointments to ensure his supporters are in positions of authority; and by the use of Source C showing Henry 'rooting out corruption'.

To achieve some balance in the response, and to reach Level 3 and above, own knowledge was essential. In this respect, Henry's conversion was often effectively cited as it clearly gave him recognition from the Catholic population as well as retaining the support of his most of the Huguenots. Other valid issues commented upon were: strengthening finance with particular reference to the work of Sully; encouraging economic development, the defeat of the League; success in foreign affairs, although this largely amounted to keeping Spain at bay; ignoring the States General and also allowing some concessions to the Huguenots without giving them parity with the Catholics.

Good answers provided some examples to support these issues and also were able to draw conclusions about the balance between the role of towns and other factors. Obviously towns did play an important role as they were centres for a range of activities, e.g. finance, religion, commerce etc, but, to ensure balance in the response, it was also important to suggest that Henry had other issues to deal with apart from the towns. For example, he had to ensure that the forces of the League were diminished, that peace was made with Spain, that finance and the economy were placed on a sound footing and that the nobility were unable to challenge his authority. Some comment on each of these aspects enabled an effective conclusion to be reached.

## **Question 2**

- (a) Candidates generally responded well to this question. Its base was in religious issues and it required an explanation for the issuing of the Edict of Nantes in 1598, rather than a description of events. Many candidates considered that the most important reason for its issue was the need for religious peace after decades of conflict, violence and disunity which had torn France apart, not just in terms of religion, but socially and economically as well,. Such answers also often included information on the Huguenot situation and the need for them as a minority group to have some protection and fair treatment. Henry IV's role in issuing the Edict was also identified as important as he sought to protect his previous co-religionists and allow them freedom of worship in agreed places. Good answers explained that this agreement resulted from Huguenot demands for a secure future as a religious group and the fact that they were prepared to stop paying the *taille* tax to support their claims. Some effective responses also understood the impact Huguenots had on the economy and the need to use their talents. Other factors such as the declining influence of the Catholic League were also significant in enabling this controversial Edict to be introduced. Limited responses tended to be general in approach. Moderate responses considered two or three precise factors and offered some development. Good responses, achieving Level 4, were also able to link their explanations and assess their relative significance.

- (b) This question required some discussion of the strengths and limits of the Huguenot threat to religious unity; one candidate lost marks because only limitations were considered. Such partial responses are unlikely to be rewarded beyond Level 3; to achieve Level 4 or Level 5 requires some balance in the argument i.e. consideration of limits and potential strengths of the threat. Answers which did not focus fully on the idea of limitations of the Huguenot threat to religious unity suggested, for example, that the Catholics were a greater threat and wrote largely on that issue, without examining the Huguenot issue. Other weak responses broadened the answer to consider a range of other potential threats but still failed to reach the higher levels as the question was about the strength of the specific Huguenot threat.

Nevertheless, there were a good number of responses which did appreciate the focus of the question. They were able to identify limits to the Huguenot threat to religious unity, for example: only 10% of the population had converted to Protestantism; Huguenots were physically confined to specific areas; the Edict of Nantes did not provide for further converts to the protestant faith; Henry himself converted to Catholicism and worked hard to maintain a degree of co-operation between Catholics and Protestants. Answers which made use of Source B were also able to argue that Henry became less supportive of Huguenots as his reign continued and imposed his choice of officials on the towns. Estimates also suggest that numbers of Huguenots declined and consisted of no more than 1 million or 6% of the population.

The balancing argument, suggesting that the threat from the Huguenots was dangerous and unlimited, focussed heavily on the fact that they were allowed to pursue their faith. Answers here had a broad range and identified issues such as: Protestants were given specific places of worship as long as they could prove these sites had been used from 1596; they were also allowed to meet and given the right hold and inherit office. The establishment of the bi-partisan courts for dealing with issues between Protestants and Catholics (the Chamber of the Edict of Nantes) was a big issue for Catholics but was eventually accepted. In addition, the Edict also contained *breve*s or secret articles which, for example, protected some League towns, gave some political and military status to the Protestants and were backed by the King's personal promises to support them.

Those responses which attempted to draw this argument together were aware that all these 'privileges' still did not give the same freedoms to the Huguenots as the Catholics; Greengrass refers to them as 'an estate on the margins'. What was significant was that the Huguenots did not rise up against the Catholics in any significant numbers (although there were occasional episodes of 'disorder') and a kind of truce was established. Good answers were aware that these arrangements were only secure whilst Henry was on the throne and therefore, although the threat might be limited at this point, it might not remain so.

### Question 3

- (a) Once again, the focus on this part (a) question must be explanation rather than description, although some supporting information is also necessary to support the response and enable reward at Level 3 and above. Effective linkages between factors will also be rewarded at the higher levels. A range of factors were provided by most candidates; one of the most important reasons identified was the element of display. Henry IV wanted to make Paris a safe and attractive place for its inhabitants and also to demonstrate wealth, power and authority. Most candidates were able to quote the building of bridges, squares, bridges, the Louvre etc. in support. In addition many answers explained the practical and economic benefits

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in creating work for craftsmen and stimulating trade both within and beyond Paris. This enabled the transition from a country at war to a peaceful community. The changes were also promoted to enable the development of trade and industry in other towns such as Lyons. Henry personally and politically, also wanted to be perceived, not just as a soldier but also as a dynamic peacetime leader, with the interests of his subjects at heart. There was also possibly a need to send a message to other states, as Henry was now King, he perceived himself remaining in that role for a long time to come; he was building for the future.

- (b) This question required some assessment of Sully's work in the financial area against that of his other roles in the economy and politics. For many candidates, finance and the economy were one issue. Better responses did see a difference in dealing with finance, e.g. cash flow, government spending taxation etc. as against the economy, e.g. industry, agriculture, trade and its strengths and weaknesses.

In relation to finance, bankruptcy was imminent on Sully's accession to the role of *Surintendant de Finances*. However, his title and Henry's support enabled him to turn the situation around to a degree over a period of time. Good answers were able to identify some of his tactics to ease the situation, e.g. he paid off some debts but drew a line under others, he stabilised the currency and looked carefully at salaries. Some answers were aware that sinecures were only available if their holders paid for them. The majority of answers had sound knowledge of Sully's revision of the taxation system and the establishment, e.g. of the *gabelle*; some also knew that these measures were not always successful as with the *pancarte*. Fewer responses stressed his virtually complete change of officials to ensure greater honesty and thus more revenue ending up in the crown's coffers.

In economic terms, responses often highlighted the development of industry, particularly the silk industry, and the building of a canal network, roads and bridges that promoted better transport and better distribution of goods. Fewer students were aware of agricultural change, e.g. the drainage of marshland. Some were aware of colonial development (New France) although this was not as successful as the changes made within France and not as profitable as the colonial expansion of England and Spain.

Weaker candidates tended to describe the changes rather than to assess the relative success of his financial changes against those in the economy. Few considered any of Sully's activities beyond finance and the economy, although the question was open to this approach. Those who did attempt this saw Sully also a politician, particularly trying to build his authority through the network of officials he had installed throughout France. In this way he did have great influence. Nevertheless, his work in finance and the economy was strategically important in enabling Henry to keep his throne.

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

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