



General Certificate of Education

History 1041

Specification

Unit HIS1D

Report on the Examination

2010 examination – June series

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Unit HIS1D

Unit 1D: Britain, 1603–1642

General Comments

The examination paper was accessible to the candidates with almost all attempting two full questions. Question 1 was the most popular, with candidates choosing equally between the other two. Most candidates had prepared well for the examination and in general they produced answers which were knowledgeable and clearly expressed. Overall the quality of written communication was good with relatively few spelling or grammatical errors. However, a small number of candidates sometimes express themselves in ways which are difficult to follow. There were spelling mistakes such as ‘persue’, ‘parliment’ and ‘thrown’ instead of ‘throne’ but these were in a minority of scripts. There were also some impressive answers with explicitly focused, coherent and well-expressed arguments supported by precise knowledge and demonstrating range and depth of understanding leading to a reasoned judgement. Although the time constraints prevented some candidates from completing all their answers most candidates seem to have completed in the time and a small minority were able to produce impressively long answers. Nevertheless the short time available for questions does make it even more important that candidates focus on the question explicitly from the beginning, link their material clearly to the question and related factors, and arrive at a reasoned conclusion. Having a sound command of relevant knowledge, including chronology, makes achieving this demanding task that much easier. As always, sound preparation of the material and practice in answering questions against time, help bring success.

There were several ways in which candidates could have improved the quality of their answers. A significant number of candidates need to avoid wasting the short time available by writing over-long answers full of unnecessary background material. This fault was particularly noticeable in answers to questions 1 (01) and 2 (03). AS candidates should be able to differentiate between causes and effects, but some were unable to do so noticeably in answers to questions 05 and 06. Candidates should avoid losing focus on the wording of the question and digressing into material, which is irrelevant or at best marginal to the question. Insecure chronology continues to be a major barrier for some candidates leading them to write irrelevant material in their answers. This was particularly noticeable in some answers to questions 2 (04) and 3 (06). Having a firm grasp of the order of events is particularly important in revolutionary periods such as that of 1640–1642 when so much happens in such a short time. It is also helpful to candidates to think of such periods as having distinct phases so that there is less likelihood of confusing very different events.

Question 1

01 Question 01 on the rejection of the Great Contract produced some excellent answers and was generally well done with many candidates achieving marks at Levels 3 and 4. Candidates were usually able to provide several valid reasons with further development both for why Parliament and why James I rejected Cecil’s proposal. The best answers were able to explain both financial and political reasons why the scheme was rejected by both sides. Top answers were able to provide accurate figures and to link financial, political and constitutional reasons in a focused, sustained and concise manner. Only a small minority of candidates did not know about the Great Contract. More common was the problem of candidates losing focus on the reasons for rejection and writing at length

on the effects of rejection. Another weakness was candidates giving very long descriptions of the various feudal dues claimed by early 17th Century monarchs or narrating the financial history of the Crown from 1603 to 1610.

- 02** Question 02 had some strong answers with candidates able to identify areas of conflict between Crown and Parliament due to financial issues such as impositions, monopolies and the funding of war as well as a range of other factors such as faction, favourites, foreign policy, constitutional issues and religion. However, quite a number of candidates wrote too generally about finance rather than providing specific examples and evidence from 1614 to 1625. Other candidates knew a lot about foreign policy in this period though not much about anything else. The 1621 and 1624–1625 parliaments were better known than that of 1614 and candidates might well study a little more about the Addled Parliament and the reasons for its failure to deliver. Some candidates concentrated their answer almost entirely on the 1623–1625 period and sometimes beyond but with little reference to the earlier part of the question. Stronger answers were able to provide specific evidence of financial issues being important in producing conflicts between James and the parliaments of 1614, 1621–1622 and 1624–1625 balanced by the importance of other factors such as faction, favourites, foreign policy, religion and constitutional issues.

Question 2

- 03** In Question 03 most candidates were able to explain puritan fears about the Spanish Match and James's failure to lead the Protestant Cause in Europe. Relatively few, however, considered the French Marriage of 1624–1625 or brought out how puritans viewed the Thirty Years War. The main weakness in answers to this question was candidates losing focus. Some spent much of their time explaining James' motives in his foreign policy rather than explaining why puritans felt threatened by it. Others embarked on unnecessarily long and occasionally muddled explanations of the causes of the Thirty Years War. Still others wrote extensively about domestic events such as the Book of Sports in explaining puritan dissatisfaction. This loss of focus weakened responses whilst chronology was occasionally an additional problem.
- 04** There were some very good answers to question 04 with candidates able to write extensively about religion as a factor leading to Crown - Parliament breakdown and assess it against other causes such as finance, foreign policy, Buckingham, constitutional clashes, Charles's personality and the attitude of Parliament. Generally candidates seemed more aware than in the past of the range of factors explaining the breakdown of relations between Charles and Parliament by 1629. There seemed more awareness amongst the strongest answers of the difficult financial situation facing Charles and the inadequacy of Parliament's provision. However, there was still under-estimation of the impact of the two wars in the late 1620s, the financial consequences of these and the resulting legal and constitutional clashes. Chronology was a problem for some candidates particularly in regard to Arminianism and finance. Such candidates tended to refer extensively to material more relevant to the 1630s such as Laudian reforms, Prynne, Burton and Bastwick ship money, forest fines, the Hampden Case, etc. There is also still a tendency, even in basically strong answers, to assert arguments rather than to offer proof. Candidates might find it helpful, in supporting their arguments for and against the importance of various factors, to use as evidence the Three Resolutions drawn up by leaders of the parliamentary opposition in 1629.

Question 3

- 05** Question 05 produced some very strong and some very weak answers. Amongst the strongest answers were those which not only explained the immediate theological reasons for the rejection of the new Prayer Book by Presbyterian Scots but referred to the lack of consultation and set the Prayer Book in the wider context of Charles as an anglo-centric, absentee king whose earlier measures had already aroused concern. Candidates writing weaker answers often lost focus on the reasons and instead described, often in graphic detail, stool throwing and pistol waving incidents or the events of 1638 to 1640.
- 06** Question 06 was the least well done. This was partly because of the lack of sure knowledge about the key events of 1638–1640 such as the two Bishops’ Wars and the two Parliaments called in 1640. Some candidates did not link the Covenanter Revolt to the Bishops Wars and the way in which these faced Charles with a financial and political crisis which necessitated the calling of Parliament. The Short Parliament was not, as many candidates pointed out, the real end of the Personal Rule but only a temporary expedient and it took a second war to force Charles to call a parliament that he could not dissolve. Candidates wrote at considerable length on the policies of the 1630s but often failed to link discontent with these policies to lack of support for Charles in both the Short and Long Parliaments. After all it was not so much the Scottish revolt as Charles’s inability to put it down and restore his authority, which brought the downfall of the Personal Rule. Candidates needed to have a better analytical grasp of the various factors bringing about this including weaknesses within the regime itself. It would also be helpful to candidates to divide the period 1638–1642 into distinct phases to avoid chronological confusion. The downfall and final end of the Personal Rule might be said to cover the period from 1638 to mid 1641 with the completion of the ‘legal revolution’ by the Long Parliament. From mid-1641 the key question becomes more about why the crisis did not end and why instead the Long Parliament divided and a civil war, which few seem to have wanted, occurred a year later in mid 1642. Quite a number of candidates wrote extensively about the Irish Rebellion but this did not occur until the October/November of 1641 after both the downfall and the permanent ending of the Personal Rule. The Irish Rebellion, Grand Remonstrance, attempted arrest of the 5 MPs etc belong more to the next phase of the British Revolution, i.e. the events leading to the outbreak of civil war.

Overall, there were many pleasing responses to the examination paper. As always candidates need to know their material well and be able to deploy it effectively. Explicit focus on the question and links to it throughout the answer, precise and accurate evidence to support arguments, and a reasoned conclusion, all help to ensure high marks.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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