



General Certificate of Education

History 1041

Specification

Unit HIS2C

Report on the Examination

2010 examination – June series

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Unit HIS2C

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

General Comments

There was an increase in the candidate entry for summer 2010 over the candidate entry for summer 2009. The standard of candidate responses for this specification was commendably high and a reflection of the ability of centres to prepare candidates for the challenges the paper presented in terms of the assessment objectives laid down in the subject criteria for History covering the skills, knowledge and understanding expected of A level candidates. Consequently the questions set effectively discriminated between the lower level responses which were characterised in AO1 (01) by narrative and/or largely descriptive responses and higher levels and Level 3 which offered more analytical and evaluative responses with secure own knowledge and cognizance of appropriate linkage across comparisons in order to offer supported judgment.

Candidates who provide explanation with evaluation, judgment and an awareness of historical interpretation were effectively addressing all Assessment Objectives: AO1, AO2 and had access to the higher range of marks. Therefore, candidates who met this range of assessment objectives were rewarded within the Levels 3, 4 and 5. Movement within the level marks can be determined by a range of factors including accuracy of written communication, particularly organisation of ideas and the use of specialized vocabulary.

The range of marks achieved this year represented the full range of marks available. There was a pleasing increase in the award of Level 4 and particularly Level 5 marks across the three questions and a number of maximum marks obtained overall. The majority of the candidates were able to gain half marks and above on Question 1 (01) and (02), showing their understanding of the material and some ability to tailor their responses to the question. Over 60% of all candidates were placed within a range Level 3 to level 4 whilst indicating clear ability to make effective comparisons with supporting own knowledge in the majority of case there remained nevertheless scope for further development of the need to demonstrates clear and effective substantive evaluation with full contextualisation.

Most candidates chose Question 3 as their second question, references to Sully's financial reforms no doubt reassuring many candidates, although developed knowledge and understanding of the *Paulette* was not always as effectively deployed. Question 2 was not only the least popular question attempted but equally the less effectively answered by those attempting it. Religious problems were clearly not popular this year and Question 2 (03 on the) *Chambres de l'Edit* was on the whole disappointingly responded to. There was a correspondingly significant difference in the mean as percentage of the maximum for Question 2. A high proportion of candidates did very well on Question 3 where the majority scored a mark of 14; mid Level 3 and above. The paper was clearly accessible and discriminated well, maintaining the good standard achieved in the summer 2009 series whilst allowing for a wider spread of marks across the grade boundaries in order to free up the award of marks at both the top and lower ends of the range.

Question 1

- 01** A number of candidates gained full marks on this question with the majority within the mark range 7 to 10 (Level 3 to Level 4). The need to demonstrate a clear and convincing ability to offer a more robust comparison of similarity and importantly difference with fully supporting and contextually developed own knowledge was required to access marks at the top end and certainly for Level 4. Many candidates received marks within the mark range 7–8 within Level 3. There was clear scope to widen the range with attention to more secure evaluation and wider contextual understanding rather than just secure descriptive comparison of similarity and difference. There remains a need to steer candidates away from the narrative responses in which sources are merely paraphrased or why sources were different. There were some mechanistic responses in which the candidates dealt with the two sources separately describing their content and ending with: 'In contrast to source A, Source B says...'. Such responses cannot progress beyond Level 2 or lower Level 3. To achieve Level 3 and particularly 4, providing demonstrative depth of comparative understanding comparisons need to be direct and linked to specific issues relating to Henry IV's position in the years 1589–1593. Own knowledge might include: increased hostility between Catholics and Protestants across Europe; external factors made Henry IV stronger, e.g. Catholics increasingly had little support from abroad, Europe was aware that Henry was not a Catholic and took no action implicitly strengthening Henry's position, Henry's abjuration was perhaps the most important of all the events of this period; a truce with the Catholics was made in August 1593 following his abjuration of Protestantism in July.
- 02** A well-attempted question with a good proportion of candidates accessing the higher range of marks with a significant proportion placed at the top of Level 3. Progression into Level 4 depends on the ability of the candidate to develop a balanced argument backed by a good range of appropriately selected evidence from the sources and from contextualised own knowledge placed within a secure understanding of historical interpretation, although the interpretation must not become the focus of the response and obscure the candidate's own historical knowledge and understanding. The higher marks are reserved for good answers which were likely to conclude that the death of Philip II removed a serious enemy but Henry's actions and those of his government, particularly Sully, were probably more important as they showed his strengths over a period of time. Similarly the focus of the question was *importance* and the need to balance the factor in the question of Philip II's death in relation to other factors. The majority of candidates were able to do this effectively, although there was at times little real contextual development of the significance of Philip's death in relation to more secure factors relating to the government of Henry IV and Sully. Candidates should have been able to have drawn information from the sources which may have included: Source A reveals that even Catholics in France, despite Henry's conversion, did not trust him; even more reason for a devout Catholic such as Philip to see him as an enemy; the death of Philip was fortuitous and removed a considerable threat. Source B maintains that the threat Philip represented was clear when war broke out but conversely this served to unite the French behind their king and thus consolidate his authority. The introduction of the Edict of Nantes was a well-timed event, the French wanted peace and the Treaty and the Edict offered this in different ways. Source C suggests there were other factors other than the abjuration and the reduction of the Spanish threat: Henry's negotiations with the towns which allowed them to exclude Protestants involving large sums of money – the sources suggest a total 30–32 million livres. This achieved both a political end as well as some resolution of the Huguenot issue. Additionally own knowledge might have included: Philip III was not as committed as Philip II to the defence of Catholicism. It also meant that the remaining members of the Catholic League were less likely to oppose Henry without the support of Spain.

Henry was able to take advantage of external events: Saluzzo, the Treaty of Vervins demanded arbitration but this was not forthcoming, Henry went to war and gained Bresse, Bugey and Gex, offering optimism to Calvinists as these regions provided access to Geneva. Internal policies were also important: Sully, a Protestant, also had a significant role in government, and his religion, as well as his skills, were important aspects of his success in reviving France's financial and economic problems: Henry's bribery too of the Catholic League for its support was significant.

Question 2

- 03** Question 2 (03) was not a popular choice nor was it well-attempted by those candidates who opted for it, with the majority of candidates scoring within Level 2. The problem appears to have been that very few candidates had a good knowledge or understanding of the bodies which made it difficult to address the specific demands of the question. A number of reasons can be suggested for the creation of the *Chambres de l'Edit*: These bodies were part of the settlement after the Wars of Religion as agreed in the Edict of Nantes. They were an attempt to provide Huguenots with encouragement to settle in specific areas, with some Catholics and to promote their loyalty to France, the King and the government. They also allowed judgment of cases brought before them, thus giving Huguenots some credibility. However, they were granted, at the king's discretion and dependent upon the monarch's continued support. They dealt with all classes and could operate across the whole of France in large towns. Henry IV needed the support of the Huguenots, having been a Huguenot and the fact that a considerable number of nobles were Huguenots. In order to reach the higher levels, candidates needed to show the inter-relationship of the reasons given, e.g. by linking the terms of the Treaty of Nantes with the issue of conflict. The Edict provided for a body to settle the issues of the wars and thus contain or eradicate conflict. Candidates should understand the links between religious issues and politics in the period and suggest that Henry's position was precarious and a non-confrontational way of dealing with religious issues was important and needed quickly.
- 04** This question was answered relatively poorly. It is reasonable to suggest however, that the paucity of responses might have been due as much to the popularity of Question 3 (06) and the attraction of a question with Sully involved. The focus of the question was to acknowledge the fact that France was a state with two religions on Henry's accession. Henry's struggle for the throne was the point at which these two religions came together. Circumstances had led to a Protestant becoming king although he had to abjure his faith to do so. Candidates also need to understand that by 1610 religious unity had not been achieved, there was a degree of mutual co-existence but it was based on a tenuous relationship and recognition that Catholicism remained the dominant religion. Good answers concluded that religious peace was not fully established or permanent but that the support of the government for the Huguenots was the most significant factor in allowing a degree of co-existence. What occurred in France was a grudging toleration but Catholicism remained the dominant faith and the religion of the majority. Religious unity was not possible when Catholicism and the Huguenot faith were both present but toleration was possible. The focus of the question required a discussion of the extent to which religious problems could be solved against evidence that religious disunity remained a feature of the period. Solutions included through indicative content: reference to the *Chambres de l'Edit*'s safeguards provided for Huguenots although care had to be taken to avoid overlap with (03), dealing with the operation of these institutions rather than a discussion of why or how they were set up. Further issues could include: The restoration of property to the Catholic Church, limited public office for some Huguenots, the Edict of Nantes and further legislation which brought some order to the Church; higher clerical standards, the decision not to implement wholesale the Trent decrees and the rejection of the Inquisition into France. This could be balanced with reference to: Henry's decision to
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allow greater monastic involvement and the endorsement and encouragement of the Jesuits and from the creation of the new college at La Fleche marked the growth of their influence. There was additionally some censorship of texts and Henry IV sponsored the petition for the canonisation of Loyola. Geographically the Huguenots found themselves restricted: Not all areas of France accepted the Edict of Nantes, persecution did exist and worship was restricted to western and southern France with restrictions on freedom of settlement for Huguenots. Essentially their survival depended on the good will and the support of the Crown which did not extend beyond the life of Henry IV.

Question 3

- 05** This was a particularly well-answered question with most candidates gaining at least Level 3. Candidates were able to draw upon secure knowledge and understanding. To reach the higher levels answered required a secure contextual understanding that war had reduced the Crown's income considerably, this combined with existing debt and some incompetency in fiscal administration made the financial situation grave. Reward was given for a number of factors which could include: the extent of the debt paced at 200 000 livres when Henry came to the throne set against an annual income of about 30 million livres the consequence largely of the wars of religion. The main tax, the *taille* and its administrative complexity did not help to alleviate the situation nor did the collection of the *gabelle* (the salt tax) whose collection similarly produces little revenue. Tax farmers often as a consequence of the nature of the administrative system contributed to the inaccuracy of estimates and revenue. Money was owed to Italian banks which required repayment, accounting systems were slow and moribund contributing to the lack of accurate knowledge of the country's finances which were and remained subject to the failure to collect taxes regularly whilst the costs of the military continued to rise.
- 06** A well-answered question which gave candidates full scope to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the work of Sully, always popular, with an opportunity to offer comparisons with the work of the *Paulette* as the main focus. Candidates were required to balance evidence which suggests that the *Paulette* was the most successful measure against that which suggests a different conclusion. The best answers were able to show supported evaluative and balanced responses. The ability to comment on the extensive nature of the reforms and draw conclusions about the role of the *Paulette* as 'the most successful measure'. Candidates were able to access the higher ranges of marks with skill and knowledgeable contextual understanding within a secure and often fully supported comparison of a complex range of factors. Nearly all candidates were able to access Level 3 with a third accessing Level 4 and Level 5. There was effective discrimination between those candidates who whilst writing at length accurately were unable to translate this secure narrative into effective evaluation and informed judgment to progress beyond mid-Level 3. Those candidates who did so were able to advance through the levels. The offering of informed and secure judgment beyond comparison achieved the highest marks. The generic mark scheme is clear on the award of higher ranges of marks within levels: For Level 4; 'they will develop a balanced argument back by a good range of appropriately selected evidence' at Level 5: 'Answers will be well-focused and closely argued. The arguments will be supported by precisely selected evidence leading to a relevant conclusion/judgment.'

The best answers were clearly those that resisted the temptation to write at great length of Sully reforms with a *Paulette* 'add-on'. A word of caution; whilst the need to offer clear and demonstrable use of historical interpretation is a specific issue within the mark scheme, some candidates let their enthusiasm for quoting historians overpower the historical focus and descriptions of what historians say obscured the candidates own knowledge and understanding of those issues. Discussion of what historians say is not an alternative or substitution for candidates own knowledge and understanding. The two

need to be more balanced; some responses offered little or no candidate own knowledge or analysis and consequently the marks reflected this. The exam is not a contest in terms of how many historians can be mentioned and what schools of thought they represent.

The *Paulette* can be seen as the most successful reform because: it had a wide appeal to office holders and to the King, it was easily administered and could be farmed out, it gave a steady annual income. It was an opportunity to remind office holders that they worked for the King and their loyalty was expected hopefully reducing fraud as records were to be kept. Consequently there was a steady demand for such posts with new groups of people becoming interested in the posts off – setting the previously moribund nature of the system; lastly there is little evidence to suggest that market in the sale of posts drew finance and investment away from trade and other activities. However, alternatively: It was seen by some as offensive, largely because it was so different, office holders should not be controlled in this way, whilst yet more saw the King as unable to control such office holders. Possibly the biggest concern was that the price of the office could rise and office holders have no control over this: Lastly the fear that it would misdirect finance and investment away from other activities and reduce the amount of money in circulation.

Sully's other reform need to be mentioned to offer a balanced evaluation: Although the *Paulette* is seen by Greengrass as Henry's 'most notorious measure' because it broke with current practice and encouraged corruption. However, it did seem to have been successful and was valued by its holders despite rising purchase prices. The *Paulette* remained a target for its critics and although it was radical for its day it was also successful in creating a band of civil servants who assisted Sully in making France more financially secure than he had found it.

This was the second summer series examination of the new specification. The vast majority of candidates provided demonstrable evidence of secure own knowledge and contextual understanding. Clearly well-prepared by their centres for the challenges and opportunities the paper again offered. Both centres and candidates are to be complemented on their hard work and enthusiasm which came through very clearly in the vast majority of the responses. Centres should be reassured that their work is well-directed and the work produced by their candidates was of a commensurate high standard. It is hoped that the comments made will enable centres to maximise their student's achievements, enabling them to reach their potential at this level and provide a secure foundation for progression into A2.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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