



General Certificate of Education

History 1041

Specification

Unit HIS2R

Report on the Examination

2010 examination – June series

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Unit HIS2R

Unit 2R: A Sixties Social Revolution? British Society, 1959–1975

Question 1

- 01** Candidates had few difficulties in identifying basic differences of view between the two sources, although there were still those whose approach to the question was laboured. Writing out a summary of Source A, before turning to Source B and only then identifying differences and similarities, reduced the time some candidates had to develop an answer. A number (falsely) tried to suggest difference where one source omitted to say something which the other mentioned and there were some rather convoluted attempts to perceive difference between the dates or names of the two publications these extracts came from. The identification of difference as something literal (rather than keeping, as instructed, to 'views') was seen again in dealing with similarity, which most candidates recognised as an essential part of the answer to this 'how far' question. Similarity of detail was, of course, present in the sources, but a good answer, responding to 'how far' the views differed, went beyond mere detail to look at the shared concern for the future and the fears that the violence engendered. Candidates also need to remember that they are required to use their own knowledge in answering this question. Many failed to add anything to the source material and this prevented them from obtaining the highest marks. The best candidates provided explanations of the context or references within the sources, in addition to something purposeful on the degree of difference and similarity, to provide convincing answers.
- 02** The sources provided candidates with some useful arguments and detail and most candidates were able to draw on these to produce a balanced case. Yet again, however, some took the words far too literally, referring to the protest marches as a 'fashion statement' (an adaption from Source A) and seeing the importance of the marches solely in terms of the degree of violence at the time and the number of injuries sustained in relation to the size of the march. Better answers went beyond the sources to explain the mixed reasons for the marches and why there were fears that 'a new stage of militant activity had begun'. Such answers considered the key words 'threat to society', rather than simply discussing whether each march was a 'threat' and some introduced balance by considering alternative threats to society – like the spread of permissive behaviour or the problems engendered by immigration. There were some excellent, thoughtful and well-argued responses to this question, but equally, there were some weaker ones which relied on misplaced source references and assertion.

Question 2

- 03** The best answers to this question paid attention to the date – 1959 – and refrained from too much general talk of vacancies created because of soldiers killed in the war and the immediate demands of post-war repair. Whilst 'post-war affluence' was certainly relevant here, some attention to the picture by the end of the fifties was needed for a well-focused answer. Some candidates effectively explained consumerism as a linking theme, others made much of Conservative policies.

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- 04** A lot of answers addressed the general impact of economic prosperity satisfactorily, although some of these paid little heed to the dates of the question and referred to developments which came after 1964. However, what separated the good from the average was the degree to which candidates considered the words, ‘*all* sections of society’. It was clear that some candidates did not understand what was meant by sections of society, which, given this Unit’s title, suggested a poor appreciation of what this study is about. Even among those that did, however, there were some who blithely assumed that everyone was affected in the same way, or looked at sixties ‘change’ in general terms rather than linking to economic prosperity. The better candidates identified those who lost out – most notably the very poor, immigrants and (it was sometimes argued) those living in more remote areas. They also appreciated that not everyone’s lives were changed to the same degree and often cited the elderly as being affected less than the youth.

Question 3

- 05** Most candidates who attempted this question were very familiar with the detail of the ‘Rivers of Blood’ speech. Unfortunately, however, some chose to relate what was said, and even describe its aftermath, rather than responding to the question of why it was delivered. In such answers reasons were, at best, implicit and marks were correspondingly low. Others adopted a more focused approach but spent too long on background contextual detail, often with little chronological understanding. (The 1958 Notting Hill riots, for example, were frequently cited as a reason for the speech without reference to the fact they had occurred 10 years earlier). Nevertheless, there were many excellent responses which were wide-ranging and provided full and linked explanations, making them well worthy of high marks.
- 06** The best answers here balanced examples of racial prejudice and hostility in its various forms, from Immigration Laws to the activities of skinheads against the slow but continuous process of racial integration that occurred in these years. Once again, there were those candidates who ignored the dates and wrote about racial prejudice on the fifties or, in some cases, about the extent of integration that exists today. However, most provided at least some degree of analysis, with a range of support, with the better answers making more direct references to the speech and Powell’s own position as well as being more secure on the details of legislation and other developments.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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