



**General Certificate of Education
January 2011**

History 1041

Unit HIS2H

Report on the Examination

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Unit HIS2H

Unit 2H: Britain, 1902–1918: The Impact of New Liberalism

General Comments

The overall performance of candidates was good. Very few came to this examination with inadequate knowledge. Those that performed less well tended to not employ examination techniques skills very effectively. Candidates need to understand the importance of balance and detailed supporting evidence. Relatively few candidates adopted a purely narrative approach to the questions and there were few examples of basic source descriptions. A growing awareness of the nature of the generic descriptors and their interpretation by examiners is now becoming increasingly evident through candidate responses.

Question 1

- 01** Very few candidates failed to focus on the specific issues raised in the question. There were relatively few examples of purely descriptive accounts of the content of the sources. Most answers were able to identify both similarities and differences although a number only established one or the other. Such responses were often raised by the use of well developed detail based on the candidates' own knowledge. Answers that identified both similarities and differences in the context of detailed relevant own knowledge were often able to demonstrate a level of understanding that enabled them to reach the highest level of reward. Many answers continued to remain in level 3 due to the lack of clearly developed understanding despite an awareness of the similarities and differences and a reasonable knowledge base. The key development is to show an overall level of good understanding that goes beyond simply identifying differences and similarities.
- 02** Most candidates were able to strengthen their chance of being placed in Level 3 or above by using both the sources and their own knowledge. Many candidates were able to use the sources in a selective and focused way in order to address the specific question directly. Less developed answers focused on the impact of the Budget. This approach often led to lack of balance in the answers and this inevitably limited the mark that could be awarded. Level 4 demands clear evidence of a balanced argument. This issue offered candidates the opportunity to consider other factors which contributed to the constitutional crisis beyond merely the Budget. Many candidates linked the crisis to the need to ensure a safe passage for the Liberal welfare programme in addition to a range of other non-budgetary detail. Answers that were able to display a sound and relevant use of the sources complemented by relevant detail and placed in the context of a balanced analysis were destined for the higher levels of reward.

Question 2

- 03** The knowledge base that many candidates revealed was impressive. Many candidates were able to present a good range of factors include references to imperialism and the Chinese slavery issue. There were some good references to the political divisions amongst the Conservatives and the growing unity amongst the Liberals and these were effectively linked to the war. Some candidates merely itemised a number of reasons and did not attempt to develop them or establish any clear linkage. A number of candidates lost the focus of this question and addressed the issue of why the Liberals won the 1906

election. This approach tended to result in answers drifting away from the Boer War and into issues such as the significance of tariff reform and the role of Chamberlain without making clear connections to the war. Examiners were particularly vigilant in ensuring that material was made relevant to the focus of the question rather than simply rewarding answers which considered why the Liberals won the election.

- 04** This was a very popular question. Less developed answers tended to be those that focused exclusively on Germany and the threat it presented to Britain. Some candidates produced quite developed and detailed responses based on this approach. Despite this detail these responses were vulnerable to having a lack of balance. The question offered candidates the opportunity to explore a wide range of factors that motivated Britain to establish a network of entente agreements. Good answers were able to develop a range of such additional factors and evaluate their relative importance in terms of the focus of the question. Some very good references were made to imperial, strategic and diplomatic issues that enabled those who deployed such detail to produce well honed and balanced commentaries which placed them in the higher levels of marks.

Question 3

- 05** Many candidates were able to call upon a good range of knowledge. Few candidates failed to refer to the negative impact of militancy. Many more went on to examine the wider contextual factors such as the political distractions which faced the government, particularly in terms of its welfare legislation programme and the problems of Ireland. Good references were also made to the attitudes of political leaders. There were very few examples of answers which lacked clear focus and drifted off into narratives based on the suffrage movement and its actions to gain the vote. Some candidates were able to reinforce their understanding of the key reasons with sound supporting detail and the best answers were those that were able to establish clear links between the factors by establishing a convincing level of prioritisation. Some candidates succeeded in showing the inter-relationship of the factors. Inevitably such responses reached the highest level of marks.
- 06** Some candidates viewed this question very narrowly and took it to be about the changing role of women during the war and the significance of the war as a factor in the achievement of female suffrage by 1918. This narrow approach acted as a limiting factor on the final mark that was awarded. Another approach was to widen the range but remain focused only on the positive outcomes. Again, this limited the opportunities to develop clear balance and an evaluative and analytical answer. The best answers were those that not only established a range of areas to consider but did so in terms of both positive and negative outcomes. There were many examples of this approach and such answers were rewarded accordingly.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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