



**General Certificate of Education
January 2011**

History 1041

Unit HIS1K

Report on the Examination

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Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

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Unit HIS1K

Unit 1K: Russia and Germany, 1871–1914

General Comments

This paper worked well in that candidates seemed to be equally comfortable with both the format of the questions and with each section of the paper, although Question 1 on Germany still remained more popular. Candidates seem to be increasingly aware of how to produce successful responses, although this knowledge is often undermined by insufficient knowledge of the topics. On the whole candidates were also able to answer questions by referring to the correct country and time period which was especially noticeable in answers to Question 3 on Foreign Policy. There were some areas where a lack of understanding of key terms meant that it was very difficult for candidates to produce high level answers and many candidates found it difficult to access the higher level marks because of a failure to address the question.

Question 1

- 01** This was the most successful of the 'Explain why/Why did' questions and showed that many candidates knew a great deal about Bismarck's political manoeuvring. The best answers were able to link a range of reasons as to why Bismarck broke with the National Liberals, many giving some priority to his desire to maintain control in the Reichstag or referring to his natural conservatism. In general candidates were able to identify a range of reasons, with the exception of a minority who produced incorrect responses.
- 02** Many candidates knew a great deal about the growth of the German economy and most were able to supply reasons for economic growth. Candidates at the lower levels tended to produce very generic responses about Germany's natural resources or more general points about population movements, these responses were given credit as were those that began by discussing the background to growth in the early 1870s, i.e. the impact of unification, or reparations from France. Technically this was outside the time frame but was given credit as background. Where many candidates encountered difficulty was in identifying what actually was government policy i.e. the imposition of tariffs, trade treaties or even naval building, although most were able to talk at length about the education system. Quite a few candidates claimed that money wasted on welfare and military production led to debt and stopped economic growth although they failed to how or why.

Question 2

- 03** This question had responses which on the whole produced long and short term causes and many candidates were able to explain how long term issues combined with short term problems to create the revolution of 1905. Some answers were generalised and failed to actually deal with the situation in 1905 at all, these responses were rewarded within Level 2. Other responses gave descriptive accounts of Bloody Sunday; again it was difficult to reward these responses with a mark above the middle of Level 2. Good answers were able to give a range of reasons and to explain why a revolutionary situation had arisen in 1905, the highest level responses were able to link these responses together and to attempt some prioritisation.

- 04** This was, in general, a well answered question with a large number of responses focused on the restoration of political stability. Many candidates also demonstrated that they were aware of the need for balance and attempted to show how the tsarist regime was both successful and unsuccessful in restoring political stability although some of these responses failed to have the range of supporting material to reach the highest levels. Answers did show a fairly good knowledge of the work of the Dumas and were able to assess the extent to which they represented a restoration of political stability. A few candidates failed to identify the correct time period and predominantly wrote about the general problems facing the regime with many references to the policies of Alexander III.

Question 3

- 05** The foreign policy question was reasonably popular this year and this question produced responses that showed many candidates were clear as to why Wilhelm II introduced Weltpolitik. Some candidates became sidetracked by stories about Wilhelm's personality and family rivalries but on the whole most gave several motivations for the policy. A few candidates were able to link and prioritise these reasons. At the lower levels were generalised and dealt with the need to achieve Germany's 'place in the sun' without really explaining what this was. A few candidates showed very little understanding or knowledge of what Weltpolitik actually was.
- 06** This question produced some reasonable responses and showed that candidates were aware of the need for balance. Many candidates did attempt to focus on the question and make some assessment on the impact of Weltpolitik. Candidates showed some knowledge of the events that caused tensions between the European powers in this time period, although many at the lower levels found it difficult to identify what was Weltpolitik and what was not. The best responses were able to assess the impact of Weltpolitik and to balance this against the impact of other factors, but some were marred by the failure to distinguish the different factors. Responses to this question also saw some candidates having great difficulty in sticking to the question dates, this seems to be an issue with responses to foreign policy questions overall. Many dealt with the Balkans in the Bismarck period or with the outbreak of war and the 'Blank Cheque'.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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