



**General Certificate of Education  
June 2011**

**History 1041**

**Unit HIS2S**

***Report on the Examination***

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# Unit HIS2S

## Unit 2S: Liberal Democracies: Power to the People?

### General Comments

Overall, the response to the paper indicated a greater assurance and competence from the candidature than in previous sessions, and questions proved to differentiate effectively. Candidates demonstrated knowledge, understanding and a conceptual awareness of all the topics and were able to target the specific demands of each question. Knowledge of USA and Great Britain, as in previous sessions, remains stronger than that on France after 1789. Terminology was used comfortably and incorporated well into answers. The nature of both liberalism and democracy was understood and candidates related information to these theories securely, but to varying degrees of effectiveness. Responses were focused and relevant and purely descriptive answers were rare. At the higher level, a very pleasing number produced excellent work and were rewarded accordingly. There were, too, only a minimal number of candidates who were not able to attempt an answer to all of the questions.

### Question 1

- 01** The overwhelming majority of candidates were able to draw out both differences and similarities between the sources. The main differences between the sources were clearly understood. Inferences were well made, if not always so fully supported from the sources and, in some cases, responses were not so well-structured, with a dependency on careful chosen passages from the sources directed at the question. Those who were rewarded at Level 4 were able to demonstrate a strong sense of context and were able to support their answers with carefully selected knowledge that added purposely to explanations. A smaller number of candidates provided knowledge for its own sake.
- 02** Sources were, by the majority of candidates, used effectively to create a framework to respond to the question. Democratic ideas were understood and many chose to link democratic influences with aspects of the constitution with Source C. This was invariably done well and proved to be an effective ploy. At the higher level, candidates developed the ideas in Source A to discuss the motives of the Founding Fathers and added to this with coverage of the uncertainties within America under the Articles of Confederation. Equally, secure knowledge of the constitution enabled some to show how the constitution did in effect become a middle way between democracy and the interests of property. Source B was linked rightly with strong government. Better candidates developed this to discuss nationalist ideas.

### Question 2

Both question 03 and question 04 demonstrated much greater awareness of this part of the specification than in previous years. However, it is clear that candidates find events leading to the revolution much easier to get to grips than the events after the Storming of the Bastille to 1792. There needs to be an appreciation of the fact that the revolution did in fact change its course, if not hurtle along a different course. This would with regard to question 03 help place the Civil Constitution of the Clergy in a much clearer focus. Despite such reservation, there were some good and some very good responses to the question. In some cases, the Civil Constitution of the Clergy was simply not known or not well known. Question 04 produced a range of responses. A significant number at best

did little more than try to with different levels of success, link the abolition of the monarchy purely to events pre 1789 and, as indicated above, had not fully realised that the France of 1792 was a different place than that of 1789 and the nature of radicalism had changed. However, a significant number of candidates were able to argue the case for continuity and change and to focus on the significant events such as the Flight to Varennes, war and the Suspensive Veto.

### **Question 3**

Questions 05 and 06 proved to be more popular than 03 and 04. Responses to question 05 were invariably of a good standard, though at the lower level, some did not develop beyond a general explanation with limited support. This was usually based on the Tories and the House of Lords not wishing to lose power. At the higher level, a considerable number produced a range of reasons, adding a depth of explanation and examining the nature of causation. Candidates made effective inroads into question 06. The vast number were able to audit the 1832 Act, though the quality of this proved to be a natural and effective discriminator, while candidates at the higher levels were able to assess the act in a wider context, frequently examining the validity of its claim as the Great Reform Act.

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