



**General Certificate of Education  
January 2012**

**History 1041**

**Unit HIS1D**

***Report on the Examination***

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# Unit HIS1D

## Unit 1D: Britain, 1603–1642

### General Comments

The vast majority of students attempted two full questions. Most attempted Question 1 and were fairly evenly divided between Questions 2 and 3. There were some particularly well-argued answers especially to questions 02, 04 and 06, even though students sometimes lacked the depth of supporting evidence. Generally the answers were well-written with relatively few spelling or grammatical errors. The best answers were explicitly focused on the question throughout, closely argued with precise, appropriate evidence, and completed with a final judgement rather than a mere summary. However, there were a significant minority of students who did not attempt the required number of questions and whose answers were often short, lacked knowledge and informed assessment, and had poor chronological grasp, suggesting that they were not yet prepared for the demands of an AS Level examination.

There are number of ways in which even quite good students could further improve. One is to ensure that they have a firm and accurate chronological grasp. Too many answers lapsed into confusion, error and irrelevancy because the student did not know when and in what order events happened. Another way in which answers could be improved is for students to answer the question asked. It is important to read, think upon and keep returning to, the wording of a question. Answers to questions 04 and 06 would particularly have benefited from this. Also, having identified the focus of a question students need to keep to that focus, and link what they write to it, all through their answer. The opening and closing sentences of paragraphs are especially useful in creating both a coherent structure to an answer as well as explicit links to the question. Students also need to express clearly the point they are making and how it answers the question, rather than expecting the examiner to work it out. Although fewer students than in the past refer to historiographical debates some still think that summarising the various schools of historical thought, often wrongly, is what the examiner is looking for. It is far better for students to put forward their arguments supported by evidence rather than write about what Whigs, Marxists or Revisionists thought. Historiographical detail is **not** a requirement of AS History units.

Spelling and use of words has improved but there are occasional lapses. It is 'Parliament' not 'parliment'; 'puritan' not 'puritain'; 'have' not 'of'; 'Arminian' not 'Armenian'; 'pursue' not 'persue' and 'altar' not 'alter'. Given the shortage of time students should not waste it on superfluous sentences such as 'I am now going to explain why....' or 'In this essay I am going to consider how far....' Students should just get on and do what the question asks of them.

### Question 1

**01** Generally this question was answered well. Most students were able to use their knowledge about the 1604–1611 Parliament to provide valid reasons why Parliament was critical of James I's financial policies in the years 1604 to 1610. Most answers were knowledgeable, providing supporting detail for their explanations. Better answers were able to show understanding of terms such as wardship or impositions, legal cases such as that of John Bate, specific examples of royal extravagance, and accurate statistics. However, there were ways in which some answers might have been further improved. The main way is for students to focus on the wording of the question, in this case why

Parliament criticised. Thus when referring to the conflict over the Great Contract in 1610 this question required students to explain why **Parliament** rejected it rather than why James did. Similarly students need to be aware that it was Parliament that voted the customs duties or Tunnage and Poundage but the Crown claimed the right to impose **additional** duties, hence 'impositions'. It was this claim that Parliament objected to and which Bate refused to pay. Students should also not confuse England's finances with the Crown's finances.

- 02** Again there were many good attempts at assessing how far Parliament was to blame for the Crown's financial difficulties in the years 1614 to 1625. It was encouraging to see that a larger proportion of students than in the past knew something about the Addled Parliament of 1614 and why it was the only parliament which failed to vote a subsidy. However, there were a worrying number of students who seemed to know little about the 1614 Parliament or indeed much about those of 1621 and 1624–1625. The relationship between Crown and Parliament is a major theme of this Specification and students would be wise to prepare carefully for questions involving all the parliaments from 1604 to 1642. Again there were ways in which answers could have been improved, for example, by pointing out that there were factors which caused financial problems which were neither the fault of Parliament nor the Crown. Amongst these were the Thirty Years War which by disrupting trade decreased the customs revenues, an important source of royal finances; inflation; under assessment for tax; and ministerial corruption. Equally students pointed to 'own goals' by the Crown such as supporting the Cockayne Monopoly which further disrupted trade and so the customs; James's failure to save Cranfield from impeachment; money wasted by Charles and Buckingham in Madrid as well as James's extravagance. Nevertheless Parliament's responsibility was central to this question and students needed to consider how far this was to blame in 1614 and for the mismatch in the 1620s between its demands for war with Spain and the amount of money it was prepared to vote. Time is short to answer questions like 02 and therefore it is important that students keep to the focus of the question. A number of students failed to do this and allowed themselves to become bogged down in describing foreign policy events between 1618 and 1625 rather than focusing on finance. Regarding foreign policy in this period, students should focus less on the Bohemian Crisis of 1618–1620, which is of marginal importance for this Specification, and concentrate more on the Palatinate crisis of 1621, the Spanish marriage question and the war with Spain from 1624 onwards.

### **Question 2**

- 03** Many students were able to produce informed answers to this question with references to Charles's Arminian tendencies; the role of Sibthorpe, Montagu and Laud; the York House Conference; and puritan worries about the French marriage and its possible effects. It is helpful if students can explain why Puritans were worried by Arminianism and can also distinguish between Catholics and Arminians. Students should also be cautious about ascribing ideas of religious toleration either to James I or Charles I. Like most early 17th century rulers, both kings believed in an Established Church to which all their subjects ought to belong. James may have accepted a broad Church which would encompass most Protestants, including Arminians and Puritans. Charles, perhaps, had a narrower view of his State Church, but neither ruler abolished punishments for those who refused to conform. Catholic recusants, for example, were fined in both reigns, and Jesuit priests hung, drawn and quartered. (The latter being a fate that, incidentally, puts the punishment of Prynne, Burton and Bastwick into perspective.) Again, chronology confused some students. Laud, for example, only became Archbishop in 1633, although Charles I from 1625 appointed him a bishop and court chaplain.

- 04** The main problem for students in answering this question was lack of knowledge about the reforms which Charles I and Archbishop Laud tried to implement in England in the 1630s. There was also a shortage of specific evidence about their, admittedly, short term success. Clearly Charles was successful in appointing more bishops sympathetic to his Arminian views. Laud did raise the status of the clergy both socially and politically, and there is evidence of a higher number of graduates amongst the clergy in certain dioceses. Most students knew about the campaign to restore an altar to the east end of churches and enforcing the use of the Prayer Book, but less about the campaign for repairing churches and increasing tithe revenues. On the failures side, most students knew about puritan opposition and the case of Prynne etc. but failed to point out that gentry control of many parish churches often limited what king and archbishop could achieve. Few referred to the successful campaign to drive out puritans from the universities and lectureships or to the number leaving for New England. Too many students spent far too long describing the Prayer Book crisis in Scotland and the subsequent Bishops' Wars without linking this in any way to England, and so making this relevant given the wording of the question. Few students pointed out that whatever short-term success Charles had in England was reversed by what happened once the Long Parliament met in 1640, with the arrest of Laud, the Root and Branch bill and puritan iconoclasm. On a more mundane level some students still confuse the Bible with the Prayer Book and Arminians with Catholics.

### Question 3

- 05** A good number of students were able to look at both the background and immediate causes of Charles's decision to dissolve Parliament in 1629. They used their knowledge of conflicts in and out of Parliament since 1625, and especially 1627–1628 over the Forced Loan, Five Knights Case and the Petition of Right, and why these angered Charles. Many also referred to his anger over the attempted impeachment of Buckingham and at Parliament's attitude to the news of Buckingham's murder. It was also pleasing that a number of students knew about the Three Resolutions (1629) and what they stated, and about the way Eliot *et al* pushed this through the Commons, finally convincing Charles that he could do without such an unruly and threatening parliament.
- 06** Answers to questions on the 'outbreak of civil war in 1642' continue to improve with more students focusing on the events of 1641–1642 such as the attainder of Strafford, the Grand Remonstrance, the Catholic Irish Rebellion, the 5 MPs, Charles's flight to York, the Militia Ordinance and Nineteen Propositions and how these divided Parliament and country rather than on events years before. The wording of this particular question directed students towards 'the actions of John Pym **in the** Long Parliament' i.e. from November 1640, but that did not stop some students writing far too much about events in the 1620s and 1630s. Students should distinguish between questions about 'the causes of the English Civil War', which might well involve looking for long-term factors, and questions about 'the outbreak of civil war in 1642' which imply a focus on more short-term factors. It was, however, pleasing to see students focusing on arguing out the question from their own knowledge of events rather than summarising, often wrongly, various schools of historical thought.

However, even strong students are still weak on the importance of events in 1642 and continue to assert that once Charles I failed to arrest his opponents on the 4th January 1642 'civil war broke out' or was 'inevitable'. Actually Charles did not raise his standard until August 1642 and the first battle was not until September. If anything the attempted arrest temporarily reunited Parliament against Charles, so why divisions re-emerged in the months which followed needs some explanation. 1642 continues to be a much neglected year and knowledge of key events in the first half of that year, and the effect of these on

creating two sides, would repay study. Students continue to assume that a civil war was certain despite the evidence that many people of all classes were reluctant to fight. Some students continue to see 1642 as Charles I versus Parliament, rather than the King and about half of Parliament versus the rest of Parliament.

Finally, students should be careful about linking the Scottish and Irish rebellions. Not only were these several years apart but the religious composition of the rebels was completely different, and so too were the immediate causes and effects. They are both examples of the problems of ruling multiple kingdoms and of the foolishness of the centre trying to impose uniform policies, but the rebellions themselves were very different. Analysis and detail about the causes and consequences of the Scottish Rebellion and Bishops Wars belongs more in answers to question on the ending of the Personal Rule rather than on the outbreak of civil war in England in 1642.

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