



**General Certificate of Education
January 2012**

History 1041

Unit HIS1K

Report on the Examination

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Unit HIS1K

Unit 1K: Russia and Germany, 1871–1914

General Comments

In general students performed well on this paper and seemed comfortable with the material. The questions on Germany and Bismarck were overwhelmingly popular and well known, with many students choosing to answer this question. Overall students seem to be more aware of question demands than in previous sessions, and most students were focused on answering the questions rather than producing general answers.

Question 1

- 01** This question asking why Bismarck ended the Kulturkampf was well answered by most students who provided a range of reasons including the desire for realignment in the Reichstag and Bismarck's growing dissatisfaction with the National Liberals. Students who gained high marks on this question gave a supported and linked answer highlighting what they thought was the most important reason for the ending of the Kulturkampf. Most students included in their answers that the Kulturkampf simply was not working. Students who did less well on this question tended to describe what the Kulturkampf was and to focus on how it actually affected German Catholics rather than why it was ended; some of these answers did link to the question and were given credit for this.
- 02** This question was again popular and well answered, with many students displaying excellent knowledge of Bismarck's domestic success and failure. Good students had a balanced view over a range of problems, including the rise of Socialism, dealing with the new Kaiser, getting legislation through the Reichstag and economic policies. Very good students showed an appreciation of the German political system and were able to highlight the change in Bismarck's position, pointing out his failures towards the end of his time in power. Some students dealt with a very limited range of issues, perhaps just the campaign against Socialism, and there were some weaker answers that focused entirely on the constitution or on the time period before 1878. A few students included foreign policy, obviously having focused on Bismarck's foreign policy issues. Where this could be linked to domestic success or failure they were given credit.

Question 2

- 03** This question demanding knowledge of the problems facing Russian agriculture was less popular and less well known, but still showed that many students had a solid knowledge of the issues affecting agriculture. Very good students were able to link political, social and economic issues to explain why agriculture was so backward. Some students were able to explain the impact of the Mir and of the lack of investment on the development of agriculture and many students pointed out that most effort was directed to the development of industry. Many students referred to general issues such as poor transport and communication and also to the size of Russia. Less successful students were vague and generalised, referring only to size and general lack of technology; some students attempted to write about the later time period.

- 04** This question allowed many students to pick up on whether the problems mentioned in 03 had been successfully resolved, and many showed a good knowledge of Stolypin's agricultural reforms. Better answers were able to refer to a range of changes with some assessment of success or failure, the slackening of the control of the Mir, opening up of new land and the setting up of peasants' Land Banks, together with the abolition of Redemption payments, helped students to support these answers well. Less successful answers showed little knowledge of the reforms and were vague as to the actual timeframe. Some students attempt to answer the question by writing about the success and failure of the Dumas, mostly this could not be credited.

Question 3

- 05** In general the questions on foreign policy are less popular and students appear to be happier writing about the earlier time period. This question was focused on the reasons for naval development in Germany after 1898 and showed that many students had a solid knowledge of the issue. Many good answers prioritised the role of Wilhelm II in the reasons for the expansion of the German navy. This was linked to a range of other factors, including domestic pressures such as the rise of Socialism, economic issues and pressure groups as well as foreign policy pressures. Some weaker answers were generalised and wrote about naval expansion as a response to French and Russian expansion rather than as part of Weltpolitik. There were also some answers that focused on describing the course of the naval race which could only be rewarded at Level 2.
- 06** This question seemed to be a little too wide for many students who failed to concentrate on the issue of German military strength and focused instead on a description, or sometimes explanation, of the causes of the war, especially the assassination of Franz Ferdinand. Better answers gave some consideration to the impact of German military strength, including the impact of the Naval Race and the existence of military plans. The general build-up of arms was referred to and there was some assessment of the relative responsibility of all the Great Powers. Students gaining higher marks then went on to discuss the other factors responsible for the outbreak of war and the relative impact of military issues. Many students focused on the impact of conflict in the Balkans and the alliance system; these were given credit but to do well on this question some consideration of the impact of military strength was required.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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

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