



**General Certificate of Education
January 2012**

History 1041

Unit HIS2N

Report on the Examination

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Unit HIS2N

Unit 2N: Anti-Semitism, Hitler and the German People, 1919–1945

General Comments

Students had to do the compulsory question based on the sources and then had a free choice of questions two or three. Question 1 on the experience of German Jews wearing the Star of David (01) and attitudes of German people to Jews in Germany 1939–1942 (02) was compulsory. Question 2 was the by far the more popular of the optional questions. Clearly an unbalanced number of students chose the different options, this may have been because question 2 was seen as being more accessible or possibly as question 3 was from the last section of the specification. There were awards at all levels for each of the six sub-questions. Statistically question 01 was answered most effectively of the 12 mark questions by the candidature, followed by question 05 and finally 03. A different pattern was seen when comparing the 24 mark responses, the three questions had similar mean marks. When considering performance at whole question level, question 1 had the highest mean mark followed by question 3.

Question 01 asks students to compare two sources in relation to their view on a particular issue. Students that simply describe the source will receive level 1 (1-2 marks); those who solely highlight differences or similarities will receive level 2 (3-6 marks); those who do both will receive or do one well in the context of their own knowledge receive level 3 (7-9 marks) and those who develop a full comparison of the degree of difference looking at similarity and difference and using own knowledge will receive Level 4 (10-12).

Question 02 asks students to give an extended response using both the sources and their own knowledge to an issue. Narrative responses which show only an implicit understanding of the question will receive Level 1 or Level 2 depending on focus and level of detail. Responses which do not use the sources or any own knowledge are restricted to level 2. Answer with good focus and effective use of sources and own knowledge will receive Level 3. For Level 4 these answers will have specific supporting material and balance. For Level 5 answers will have sustained judgement.

Questions 03 and 05 asks students to explain an event or issue, and responses need to cover a range of reasons 'why'. Three reasons, supported by evidence, will secure an award of Level 3 (7-9 marks). To achieve Level 4 (10-12 marks), students must offer links between the factors, for example, prioritising with an explanation, or appreciation of the inter-relationship of the factors.

Question 04 and 06 requires an extended response. Answers with some understanding of the question but a lack of evidence, or narrative which demonstrates an implicit understanding of the question will only gain marks within the lower two levels (Level 1, 1-6 and Level 2, 7-11 marks). Answers with focus and evidence will reach Level 3 (12-16 marks), though they may not consider alternative factors and therefore lack balance. At Level 4 (17-21 marks) answers will have balance and depth of evidence. Level 5 (22-24) answers will also demonstrate judgment.

Overall the paper was answered well but knowledge seemed rather thin at times, notably on the issue of German peoples' attitudes during the war period, with many students writing about earlier periods instead. Students need to pay closer attention to the dates attached to questions as parts of responses on the wrong time period will not receive credit. The majority of scripts showed good understanding of the units themes and content. The level of knowledge was high but the application of this knowledge to the questions did at times lack precision.

Question 1

- 01** There were some very good responses to this question but it is important that students are aware they need to pick out similarities and differences between the sources. For top marks students should put answers in the context of their own knowledge about the question and should conclude by stating the degree to which the sources are similar or different and why. The sources were different in that the author of Source A had a positive reaction from a man he knew, whilst the Jewess in Source B suffered 'bitter disappointments with acquaintances and colleagues' and generally suffered much more ill treatment than is talked about in Source A. There are however key similarities: both receive abuse from strangers; there are comments showing their unease in Source A Victor is told 'don't let wearing the star get you down' which suggests it was and in Source B it is described as 'a form of torture'; there is clear disapproval of the treatment of the Jews in Source A and a hint of it at the end of Source B 'They looked away in embarrassment. This question was the best answered on the paper with students doing a good job of finding similarities and differences. Some good own knowledge about indoctrination of the young was applied as was knowledge about terror.
- 02** This question proved to be comparatively difficult. Some found it hard to quantify the level of anti-Semitism. The better students acknowledged this and explained how for the majority of the German people it is hard to judge whether they were anti-Semitic or not. Weaker students tended to make generalisations about all Germans being anti-Semitic in the same way the Nazis were. In previous papers there has been good knowledge about wartime propaganda, especially how anti-Semitic films such as 'The Eternal Jew' were received by the German public. This knowledge was only applied by a minority of students. There were a number of attitudes expressed in the sources, with Source A showing both sympathy and hostility and Source B showing a variety of negative attitudes. Source C gave insight into the use of propaganda, but was under used by many students. Many students failed to add to the ideas expressed in Source C with precise own knowledge. It is worth emphasising that Source C is only there to help with 02, so contains key information to help with the answer. The blending of own knowledge with source material is a difficult skill, many students rely very heavily on the sources with very little own knowledge. To hit top level three or higher it is essentially that use of the sources is supplemented with well chosen own knowledge.

Question 2

- 03** This appeared to be a straightforward question but a number of students confused it with Kristallnacht for reasons which were not fully clear. Other students gave rather vague and imprecise detail showing a lack of knowledge about the causes. A number of students gave very good answers discussing the foreign boycott of German goods that the Nazis blamed on a 'Jewish conspiracy', the pressure from grass-root Nazis, Nazi euphoria on coming to power and Hitler's desire to 'test' German attitudes. The best answers made links or effectively prioritised the reasons. Some students wrote more on the failings of the boycott than its causes.

- 04** There were some good answers to this question but whilst many students knew about the patterns of emigration, many struggled to separate out the wish to leave amongst the Jewish community from those aspects of Nazi policy which made it hard for them to leave. Some students gave strong arguments that countered the idea that the premise that the policy failed. Students approached the question in a number of valid ways which were all credited, for example looking at reasons why German Jews did not leave and comparing it to other factors that made it hard for them to leave, e.g. other countries not being willing to take them, confusing Nazi policy including seizing assets of those who had left. Others compared the attitudes to leaving amongst the different parts of the Jewish community e.g. wealthy compared to poor, young compared to old.

Question 3

- 05** This was not done by a large number of students but those who did coped quite well. There were some difficulties in finding 3 or more reasons but generally the responses were well put together. There were possibly less obvious ways of linking the reasons than in some previous 'explain why' questions, but there was some effective prioritisation by students. A number of students simply described what happened on the death marches; such descriptions received little credit.
- 06** This was done by a relatively small number of students. It was done well by some but others struggled with the concept of 'economic considerations. Essentially there are a number of areas that students should have looked at: the use of Jews as slave labour both in ghettos and camps; the refusal to spend resources on feeding/housing of Jews in the occupied territories; the theft of Jewish goods and property through the period, going from the seizing of Jewish homes and businesses to organised stripping of Jewish wealth such as the mass theft from inmates carried out in 'Canada' in Auschwitz; the costs of the transportation and mass killing in terms of expenditure and man hours; and the fact that ideology seemed to completely override economic considerations – mass killing of a workforce as the lack of resources caused problems on the front lines.

In general students were well-prepared and showed continued improved exam technique compared to last year's entry, especially on 01. The students did seem however to struggle to apply their knowledge to the questions and often wrote more about what they wanted to address rather than what the question had asked. The marking team noted that whilst many students knew a great deal, many seemed to have a general understanding but were unable to recall the level of precise detail that would be required for high level responses on a depth paper.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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