



**General Certificate of Education
June 2012**

History 1041

Unit HIS1F

Report on the Examination

Further copies of this Report on the Examination are available from: aqa.org.uk

Copyright © 2012 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

Copyright

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered schools/colleges for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to schools/colleges to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

The Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (company number 3644723) and a registered charity (registered charity number 1073334).
Registered address: AQA, Devas Street, Manchester M15 6EX.

Unit HIS1F

Unit 1F: France in Revolution, 1774–1815

General Comments

In this June's examination session, Question 1 was again the most popular question, with a fairly even number of students answering Questions 2 and 3. Most students completed the paper and appeared to have divided their time well, writing answers of appropriate length – fully using the 12 and 25 minutes which were available for each question set.

There was a wide range of responses. The majority of students had a firm understanding of how to structure answers effectively (at least 3 reasons for the 01/03 and 05 questions and a well-structured and balanced argument in the 02/04/06 mini-essays). However, many still lacked the precise knowledge needed to support their points, which kept them from achieving the highest marks. Confusion over key terms and dates also undermined students' performance. Lack of understanding of what the Revolt of the Nobles was or who the peasantry were, for example, seriously affected the responses in questions 01 and 02.

It was pleasing to see that fewer students in this session spent time on giving the views of historians. This is not necessary at this level, and the limited time available to answer questions means that students do better when they focus on developing their own points rather than getting side tracked into giving those of historians.

Question 1

- 01** Although Question 1 is usually the most popular question on the paper, it is rarely the best answered question. As in previous examination sessions, many students used parts 01 and 02 to write everything that they knew on the background to the revolution and the Ancien Regime, without carefully selecting the information that they needed for this specific question. Thus, students who knew little about the Revolt of the Nobles, spent a lot of time describing the problems of the Ancien Regime generally which did not allow them to achieve many marks. Students who knew about the Revolt of the Nobles, however, were able to effectively link the financial crisis to the Revolt of the Nobles and to come up with a range of points from the failure of the Assembly of the Notables to Louis' actions with regard to the Parlements. The most effective answers were able to link the long-term problems of the Ancien Regime with the events of 1788 and even to bring in the impact of the Enlightenment on the actions of the Parlements.
- 02** This was the question that caused the most problems on this examination paper. Surprisingly, a great number of students did not know who the peasantry were and assumed that 'peasantry' was another term for the Third Estate as a whole or for poor people generally. Thus, many students talked about the peasantry as being key for the storming of the Bastille and for participating in the Tennis Court Oath and the National Assembly. This meant that they also then struggled to develop a balanced answer.

On the other hand, students who understood who the peasantry were wrote some excellent answers; they were able to discuss the events and consequences of the Great Fear, and to balance the role of peasantry against the roles of the *sans-culottes* and the bourgeoisie.

Question 2

- 03** Most students were able to give some reasons as to why Robespierre had become so powerful by 1793, though again, some struggled to include enough precise detail to support their points. As with question 01, the most successful answers focused on the specific short-term reasons, referring to such events as Robespierre's role in the execution of the King or the expulsion of the Girondins from the Convention and the impact that such events had on Robespierre's standing.
- 04** Most students knew enough about the Terror to be able to write a balanced answer regarding its effects on the Republic. The majority of students discussed the impact of the Terror in getting rid of opposition to the Republic in the Vendee and other areas of France, and weighed these points against the negative impact of the Terror – particularly aspects such as deChristianisation. Some of the more effective answers divided their answers into political, economic and religious terror and how each affected the survival of the Republic. Those that were able to sustain a convincing argument supported by precise detail were able to reach Level 5.

Question 3

- 05** This question was generally well done with the majority of students able to find three reasons as to why the coup of 1799 was successful. Weaker answers focused more on the question, 'Why did the Directory fail?'. While the problems of the Directory were relevant to the answer, these needed to be linked to the success of the coup, e.g. that no-one was prepared to save the Directory when the coup happened, or that the increasing use of the army by the Directory made it prone to a coup itself. The most successful answers also focused on the actual events of the coup, such as the planning by Sieyes and the role of the army and of Lucien.
- 06** Again, this question was well answered by many students. Students had a good understanding of the Concordat and its implications for Napoleon's consolidation of power in France. They were also able to balance this against other factors that helped him to consolidate power such as the creation of the Legion of Honour or the way he dealt with opposition. Most students successfully focused on the time frame set in the question, keeping their examples to the time period 1799 to 1804. Weaker answers wrote generally about all of the measures that Napoleon put in place without any focus on 'consolidation of power'. Students need to be reminded that they should look carefully at the wording of Napoleon questions so that they structure their knowledge of Napoleon's reforms (which is often very good) to effectively answer the specific question on the paper.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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

UMS conversion calculator: www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion