



**General Certificate of Education  
January 2011**

**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**

There were 442 entries for the unit. Candidates had to do the compulsory question based on the sources and then had a free choice of question two or three question. Question 1 on Hitler's and the SS's roles in the persecution of the Jews was compulsory. Question 2 was the less popular of the optional questions, being answered by 181 of the candidates, compared to 243 who answered Question 3. Clearly a fairly balanced number of candidates chose the different options. 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, where question 06 was the best answered by a small margin from question 02, with question 04 being statistically the least well-answered of the 24 mark questions by a considerable distance. When considering performance at whole question level, question 1 had the highest mean mark followed by question 3 with question 2 having the lowest mean mark.

Question 01 asks candidates to compare two sources in relation to their view on a particular issue. Candidates 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 candidates 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 candidates 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), candidates 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 well answered but knowledge seemed rather thin at times notably on the issue of Nazi ideology. Questions 03, 04 and 05 all demanded a degree of knowledge as to the

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reasons behind Nazi persecution of the Jews in the case of 04 and 05 and other groups notably the disabled in 03. These questions were markedly less well answered than the other questions on the paper that related more to events and actions.

### **Question 1**

- 01** There were some very good responses to this question but it is important that candidates are aware they need to pick out similarities and differences between the sources. These differences and similarities should be related to the views of the sources not simply their factual content. The sources were different in that B focuses on Hitler's 'central role', whilst Source A is more focused on the role of other leading Nazis and suggests that they pushed the anti-Semitic agenda. A does state that there is 'no doubt' about Hitler's role whilst Source B states that certainty about his role is 'complicated' by him not issuing 'explicit written orders'. There are also some similarities, such as Hitler not being solely responsible for the persecution and also that his role was often one of 'authorising' rather than initiating policy. Own knowledge was generally good when used and related to events such as Kristallnacht and Wannsee linking with the roles of Goebbels and Heydrich. To achieve Level 4 a developed comparison how far the sources differ is required. This involves going beyond simply stating similarities and differences and deciding on the degree of difference/similarity, many candidates did this with effective conclusions. However simple statements at the end such as 'They disagree more than they agree' was not sufficient to push marks into Level 4 unless they were backed up. Discussion of provenance was often very poor with simplistic statements about the authors 'not being there at the time'. With two secondary sources from respected historians it is unlikely students will find much to comment on in relation to provenance. However some candidates showed good understanding of Kershaw's theory of 'working towards the Fuhrer'. This question was the best answered on the paper with candidates doing a good job of finding similarities and differences
- 02** There were some excellent responses to this question and the use of sources generally quite good with students often able to find information for both sides of the argument. Some responses were excellent with detailed knowledge of the actions of the *Einsatzgruppen* and the role of the SS in the transportation and murder of the Jews. The sources were used effectively in particular Source C. There were some common errors in own knowledge such as treating the *Einsatzgruppen* as being completely separate from the SS and not knowing that Heydrich worked in the SS under Himmler. Some candidates made general statements about the SS running the camp etc. but failed to bring in any precise detail. To access Level 4, candidates needed to show balance and many did this by looking at the role of Hitler, other leading Nazis, the army and ordinary Germans. Many candidates offered some good balance picking out both areas of SS responsibility and balancing this against the role of others, in some cases however candidates still fell short of Level 4 due to a lack of depth in their own knowledge. Some students made valid points in judging

### **Question 2**

- 03** Statistically this was the least well-answered question on the paper. Many responses to this question were based on the incorrect assumption that sterilisation laws were aimed at the Jews. Many candidates also confused sterilisation with euthanasia. Some candidates were able to give multiple reasons including Nazi beliefs in Social Darwinism, desire for 'racial purity' and Nazi calculations about the 'burden' that the disabled and asocials represented on the German economy. The best answers focused on the ideological basis of the policy and then connected these to more pragmatic considerations and the idea of

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the Nazis testing public opinion regarding their racial theory. To gain level 4 candidates need to show prioritisation of factors and/or links between them. This was not done by many candidates, and many candidates marks were pulled down due to lack of range as one or two of the reasons they gave were incorrect. Answers giving anti-Semitism as the sole reasons for the sterilisation laws received no credit.

- 04** Although there were some very good answers, this question was not well-answered by a number of candidates. Students struggled to support the arguments about the importance of 'racial purity' with examples from 1933–1939. There are several Nazi policies that good candidates picked up as being strongly linked to 'racial purity' such as 'The Law for the Protection of German Blood', marking of Jewish passports and social segregation. Candidates generally had some good knowledge of possible origins of Nazi anti-Semitism though some answers focused on the basis of Hitler's anti-Semitism being his childhood and experiences in Vienna were rather weakly connected to question. What many candidates failed to do was stick to the time period set and large amounts of their response would relate to earlier events (which could be valid, in helping explain causes of persecution, but then needed relating to events 1933–1939) or later events such as the Holocaust which were not relevant to the question. Some candidates focused on euthanasia which like sterilisation was not focused on the Jews. The strength of some answers was factors other than 'racial theory' such as economic considerations and events such as the murder of von Rath and many candidates showed understanding of the need for balance and there were some convincing judgements.

### **Question 3**

- 05** This question was generally not very well done by candidates. Most candidates struggled to produce a good range of reasons as to why Hitler linked the Jews with communism. Some candidates showed good knowledge of Jewish communists both in and outside Germany (in particular Russia and what Hitler saw as Jewish-Bolshevism), Hitler's belief in the 'Protocols of the Elders of Zion' and the impact of Rosenberg in convincing Hitler of the link. Candidates who gave the best answers separated reasons into different categories such as famous Jewish communists, events in Russia, influence of other people and other factors such as the 'communist threat' being a target that struck a stronger chord with many Germans than the 'Jewish threat'. Hitler used this to try to increase anti-semitism in Germany. To achieve Level 4 a candidate needs to make links between factors and/ or show prioritisation of factors.
- 06** There were some excellent responses showing a full understanding of the evidence for and against there being anti-semitism in Germany in the years 1919 to 1929. Some candidates very impressively discussed change over time and that the level of anti-semitism varied through the period, often linking this to political and economic crisis in Germany notably the Treaty of Versailles, the Ruhr crisis, hyperinflation and the Wall Street Crash. Best also discussed the differences in terms of urban/ rural areas, assimilated Jews/ Eastern Jews and even regional differences e.g. Berlin compared to Bavaria. There was good knowledge displayed of Jewish success and assimilation as well as the existence of extreme anti-semitic groups as well as historical arguments about the level of underlying anti-semitism in Germany.

Some weaker candidates simply agreed or disagreed with the statement. Some found it hard to quantify the level of anti-semitism. The better candidates 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 general candidates were well prepared and showed improved exam technique compared to last year's entry especially on 01. There were however, a substantial number of candidates answer's were made less effective due to poor recall knowledge. A lack of knowledge especially in questions 03 and 05 pulled down many candidates marks and some struggled with focus in 04.

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

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