



**General Certificate of Education
January 2012**

History 1041

Unit HIS2D

Report on the Examination

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Unit HIS2D

Unit 2D: Britain 1625–1642: The Failure of Absolutism?

General Comments

Few candidates failed to use the sources in their responses to Question 02 and the majority were able to make some attempt at the questions they selected. Most showed a sound overall grasp of the periods in question. Questions 03 and 04 on the period 1625 to 1629 slightly more popular than Questions 05 and 06 on the Personal Rule.

Question 1

- 01** Most candidates dealt with comparing the sources well. The best avoided summarising the sources before beginning a real comparison. Many candidates worked their answer to a structure of considering differences and similarities before bringing their answer to a conclusion. The strongest answers made sustained comparisons, pointing out the differences and similarities while paraphrasing key source content and supporting this with specific own knowledge. The overall general weakness in answers was that some failed to provide supporting own knowledge when comparing the sources. When considering these sources it was encouraging to see some candidates commenting on the tone of the argument of the sources given the evidence they outlined.
- 02** Some candidates still relied too heavily on the sources or had their 'use' of the sources. The best responses integrated reference to the sources as part of an argument.

Most candidates were able to provide some balance in their answers, notably by pointing to the role of parliamentary radicalism while also addressing other factors. The best answers illustrated the link between such central factors as parliamentary radicalism, religion and Charles. It was encouraging to read strongly supported argument that made the link between Charles's actions, the development of parliamentary radicalism and, in turn, through Constitutional Royalism, the two sides necessary for civil war.

More candidates did need, however, to have a more secure grasp of the process of breakdown, particularly as a consequence of the Irish Rebellion. The importance of the Militia Bill, Grand Remonstrance and 5 Members' Coup need development. Candidates should also be aware that although the Militia Ordinance was passed in March 1642, civil war in England did not break out until August 1642. It was the activism of religious radicals in the localities, Cromwell being a key example, who destroyed the last attempts of moderates at settlement through the 22 county neutrality agreements.

Question 2

- 03** There were some impressive answers that could explain the production of the Three Resolutions in terms of its content and context. Such answers explained the financial and religious elements of the parliamentary statement. They also explained how the Three Resolutions derived from the content and nature of the passage of the Petition of Right.

- 04** Most could address religion as a key factor and, to varying degrees, consider the other factors of the period, finance, foreign policy, Buckingham and Charles. Key evidence in relation to religion should be Montagu, the York House Conference and the emergence of Arminians such as Laud. Some candidates provided useful explanations of the negative perceptions of Arminianism by Puritans and moderate Calvinists. Fewer were able to deal with Parliament as a source of tension, particularly missing using the Petition of Right and Three Resolutions and thereby sometimes restricting their answers to the 1625 to 1627 period. Comment on the links between the factors, for example religion, finance and foreign policy could be developed. The role of Charles underpinning all of these practical problems, and by his antagonistic reaction to parliamentary criticism creating constitutional tension, could be developed.

Question 3

- 05** This was the least well answered question on the paper. Many candidates did secure Level 3 marks by explaining in some general terms the issues raised by Wentworth in Ireland. The better responses were able to support the concern generated by the financial and religious policies with reference to specific examples as well as commenting on Wentworth's management of the Irish Parliament.
- 06** The strongest responses dealt more clearly with the idea of surface success and the creation of growing discontent in response to Charles's financial and religious policies. Many needed to put more detail into their consideration of Charles's measures but the key area that needed a fuller consideration as part of a judgement on success was opposition. Candidates needed to give examples of opposition but, more importantly, comment on the nature of this opposition. Examples of opposition could include:
- St. Gregory's Case
 - Prynne's Histriomatrix
 - Emigration, particularly through the Providence Island Company
 - The Scottish Rebellion
 - Hampden's Case
 - Prynne, Burton and Bastwick
 - John Lilburne
 -
- The best responses commented on the Scottish rebellion as the trigger for Charles initiating the Hampden Case and the subsequent examples of more open opposition in the crisis years of 1638–1640. Some very good responses also used the evidence of the attitude of MPs in 1640 to comment on Charles's alienation of the political nation.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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