



**General Certificate of Education
January 2012**

History 1041

Unit HIS2R

Report on the Examination

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Unit HIS2R

Unit 2R: A Sixties Social Revolution? British Society, 1959–1975

General Comments

Most students managed to complete the required answers in the time given for this paper and the vast majority used the sources for 01/02, identified factors for 03/05 and achieved some depth and balance for the mini essay 04/06. There were some instances, however, where the students made life difficult for themselves by using too much unnecessary descriptive material for the 12 mark questions and lacked clear focus on the question in the 24 mark questions; this latter point was particularly noticeable for the question on the Permissive Society. The lack of genuine own knowledge and reliance on identifying differences rather than clear similarities remains an issue for many answers to 01. However, the stronger scripts showed a real willingness to engage with the questions and the issues raised by them in a sustained fashion with confidence borne out of having well prepared material. A general point worth noting, even for these students, is that having opinions and making judgements about the questions (e.g. 'how far' for 01), i.e. developing a clear line of argument, is needed for the highest marks. There was a fair balance between students choosing 03/04 on Profumo and the 1964 election and 05/06 on education, although there was an overall preference for the former.

Question 1

- 01** The majority of students were able to identify the main differences between the sources on the punishment of Mick Jagger, based around the view of Source A that he was harshly treated due to his celebrity status and Source B's view that the punishment was appropriate; some of the better students drew the similarity that the two sources agreed that his fame or notoriety, rightly or wrongly, was a factor in the punishment. However, many students struggled to identify clear similarities and therefore failed to address clearly the 'How far?' aspect of the question. 'Own Knowledge', in terms of establishing context, was fairly limited in many answers with many students focusing on rather generalised provenance. Those that did manage to combine similarity, contextual own knowledge and difference scored highly.
- 02** There were some excellent answers to this question. Students who had a clear understanding of what was meant by the 'Permissive Society' were able to draw on a wide range of balanced material to argue whether Britain had indeed become one by 1970. Good references to the liberalising legislation from the Theatre Act, Obscene Publications Act to the Acts on abortion, divorce and homosexuality, when used in a focused way, enabled students to assess whether Britain was becoming more permissive in its attitudes or simply more civilised. Some very good counter points, such as there being a permissive 'State' rather than permissive 'society' and that, as shown by the sources, there was a strong conservative tradition alive and well in Britain, facilitated some strong answers. A general point that students should take clear note of Source C in this question (though need to use all three!) as it does aid in suggesting balance and breadth; in this case with the 'moral backlash' at the end of the sixties amidst 'the rising tide of permissiveness'. However, too many students simply wrote extensively implicit answers concerning Sixties change and failed to link this detail to the focus of the permissive society. Youth culture, music, fashion, even immigration and consumerism, were widely described in some of the less effective scripts. An over-reliance on the sources or no / minimal reference to them

also put students at an immediate disadvantage. Those who combined the sources with clear own knowledge to provide a line or argument scored highly in this question.

Question 2

- 03** There were some very strong answers to this question where the students kept their focus on identifying factors rather than writing all the obviously interesting details of the Profumo Affair. Many students were able to do so and identified a clear and well supported range of factors for how MacMillan and his premiership were damaged by this affair and were able to show how these were linked, for example the lies, immoral behaviour and lack of trust undermining the authority of the Establishment, of which MacMillan was a member. Some students compared the importance of the Profumo Affair with a whole host of other factors, such as the deteriorating economy, the growing appeal of Wilson and the Labour Party, even the Suez Crisis, to explain the undermining of MacMillan i.e. treated this like a 24 mark question; this approach put those students at a disadvantage.
- 04** This question was broadly tackled well by students and many showed good knowledge of the differences in style between Home and Wilson and then compared the importance of this with other, in some cases more deep-rooted, reasons for the Labour 1964 election victory, such as the scandals that had plagued the Conservatives, the struggling economy as well as the transformation of the Labour Party under Wilson. Many argued very effectively that it was the substance of what Wilson was offering the country in terms of modernisation and focus on technology rather than simply style that mattered whereas others argued that the Conservatives lost rather than Labour won. Answers that combined good depth and balance with a clear line of argument scored very highly. Weaker answers either lacked that range and depth to give valid and meaningful balance or dismissed the 'style' focus of the question out of hand.

Question 3

- 05** This question was tackled with mixed success. Strong answers showed a wide range of relevant and valid factors, with many focusing on the wish to widen opportunities for those who were bypassed by higher education, such as the older generation, mothers or those who couldn't afford it. Those students who linked this with the opportunity offered by new technology and the economic necessity of improving Britain's higher education provision scored particularly highly. It may be useful to remind students who produce a list of factors, sometimes well developed, but do not attempt to show how the different factors combine, that this is needed for the higher marks.
- 06** Many students produced impressive answers to this question. Those who assessed the 'all young people' aspect of the questioned fared well, as did who dealt, in a balanced way, with both secondary and higher education. Weaker answers described the changes concerning comprehensive schools rather than assessing its impact on the education of young people and whether they broadened opportunity or hindered it for some. 'Young people' is rather generic and those students who broke that down into particular groups, based on gender, class or indeed race, were more successful in assessing the overall question. Higher education was tackled with less conviction, with some relying on a repetition of the detail from 05 on the Open University, although the continuing gender issue was assessed well by many. Those students who accurately assessed the state of education in 1963, i.e. the failings of the Tripartite system and the perceived arts based elitism of the higher education sector, as pointed out by the Robbins report, to establish clear focus on the idea of 'opportunity' commonly went on to give strong answers on how far this changed.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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