



**General Certificate of Secondary Education
June 2011**

History A 4040

40402D Germany, 1919–1945

Report on the Examination

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General Issues

The general quality of the work produced by candidates was good and impressed the examiners. Most candidates demonstrated a broad knowledge of the period and an understanding of the main concepts through the key issues identified in the syllabus and the people and events specified. No part of the paper was misinterpreted and there were few cases where candidates had failed to provide an answer. Even weaker candidates were able to write at often considerable length on the later parts of Questions 1, 2 or 3. While the main issues and trends in the German history, 1919–1945, covered by the paper seemed well understood, there were some small specific areas where candidates displayed weaker knowledge and understanding. This was evident in relation to the answers to Question 2. However it is good to see candidates in the examination integrating their knowledge of the period with the historical skills they have learned in order to demonstrate convincing historical reasoning. The value of the large, colour images used in the paper was evident; they proved stimulating and accessible across the full ability range.

The demands of this paper were broadly consistent with those of the legacy specification. Question 1 and Questions 2 or 3 of Section B offered the opportunity for all candidates to show what they understood, knew and could do. It was noticeable that the more able candidates distinguished themselves on Question 1(e) and on 2(c) or 3(c). In Question 1 of the paper many candidates used knowledge well to support their answers to parts 1(c) to 1(e). In Section B candidates showed a marked preference for Question 2 about Weimar Germany rather than Question 3 on Hitler's Dictatorship.

Section A

Question 1(a)

The majority of candidates successfully comprehended and drew inferences about the Hitler Youth from these sources. Knowledge of the Hitler Youth was not called for, but many candidates chose to use their own knowledge in this question. The majority of candidates reached a high level 2, being able to draw more than one valid inference about the Hitler Youth. At level 2 candidates were able typically to make comments about the brainwashing of young people that occurred in the Hitler Youth. It was stated that frequently that the young Germans enjoyed the activities and fun of the experience of the Hitler Youth. Able candidates emphasised that the subtlety of the experience of indoctrination and others mentioned that children did not realise until too late the brainwashing that they were exposed to. A number noted the enjoyment that the children obtained from being outside parental control. There were a small minority of level 1 responses that simply paraphrased Source B.

Question 1(b)

The majority of candidates showed comprehension and drew inferences about the different attitudes to the Hitler Youth shown in the Sources C and D to those in Sources A and B. Candidates found the sources easy to deal with in terms of their ideas and language. A majority of candidates were able to reach level 3 through correctly identifying contrasting attitudes in the two sets of sources. Weaker answers often made a simple comparison between the sources

based on what they said or suggested about the Hitler Youth experience and for this the response gained reward at level 2. Many candidates assumed that the contrast between the sources was self-evident and so reference to Sources A and B were implicit.

Candidates made observations about the fact that in A/B the view was that the Hitler Youth was fun and exciting whereas in C/D the experience was one of boredom, repetition and military activity. Commonly this was expressed as a comparison of the differing activities. Able candidates mentioned the compulsion in C/D that contrasted with the element of freedom of the first two sources. Responses often went on to mention the decline in attractiveness of the Hitler Youth movements as the participants became older and the Hitler Youth became a more established organisation. Some examiners noted once again that many candidates mixed up how and why sources differed in their responses to this question, thus they began answering Question 1(c) during their answer to Question 1(b).

Question 1(c)

In this question candidates had a clear target to explain why there were differences between Sources A/B and C/D. Candidates showed understanding of the skill being tested here and most used the differences between the authors or the time of writing to underpin their answers. The general level of thinking in answers to this question was good and led in the main to level 2 and level 3 marks.

Although this question elicited a full range of responses, at a basic level a number of candidates wanted to explain how the sources were different. A significant number of candidates ignored the provenance of the sources and merely described how the experiences of the Hitler Youth differed. This approach received level 1 marks (1-2). A common feature of answers at level 2 was to explain differences between the sources through the time difference in the production of the sources. This point was often coupled with the likely difference in the experience of a 12 year-old (B) and an older teenager (C). Many candidates emphasised the differing experience of girls and boys. The development of the time differences in detail and context usually brought level 3 marks to the candidate (6-7 marks). The question also produced a number of answers that went into great depth about the Edelweiss Pirates and rebel youth groups; other responses gave detailed accounts of what happened in schools to indoctrinate young people. Some candidates made the valid point that the presence of rebel and opposition youth groups validated Source D in that it showed the Nazis having to try harder to win the hearts and minds of German youth. Level 4 answers usually involved reference to the strong expectation of joining the Hitler Youth after 1936 and the compulsion that was present after 1939.

Question 1(d)

Candidates found Source E straightforward and it was easy for them to discuss its utility. The size and use of colour helped candidates discuss the details of this source. A small number of candidates summarily dismissed the source as useful; a number of answers ignored the information that Source E comprised posters. Examiners noted that many candidates based their answers around the content of the source. These answers were rewarded at level 2 (3-4 marks). It was common for answers to discuss how the Nazis were offering rewards to workers who worked hard and produced more. A few candidates pointed out the fact that they knew that few people received a Volkswagen car. It was pleasing to see so many candidates reflected on the source's provenance. While in some previous years candidates have struggled with the latter, on this exam paper the fact that Source D was a poster gave most candidates the pointer they needed to make relevant comments on its utility. The value of the source was frequently considered to lie in the fact that it was a propaganda poster meant to encourage the workers to greater productivity. Some candidates thought that, as with the car, none of the workers ever

went on the KdF holidays. Many responses had an impressive knowledge to explain the other Nazi policies towards the workers or the outcomes of Nazi policies. The hard manual labour of some projects such as the building of the autobahns was frequently referred to, as were wage rates and hours worked. The fall in the numbers of unemployed Germans was well explained with references to the effect of encouraging women to stay at home, to discount Jewish employment and increase the number of men in the armed forces. Examiners saw many references to the broader sweep of Nazi economic policies in the drive for self-sufficiency but fewer references to the creation of a war economy. A perceptive minority of responses, usually at level 4, noted that the use of colour at this time would have been eye-catching, and unusual for the time that they were produced. Candidates who used the content and commented on provenance were rewarded with level three marks (5-6). At level 4 there were a few sophisticated answers using the candidates own knowledge to integrate content and provenance in a very impressive manner, for example in explaining the that workers in different industries received differing wages and incentives depending on whether they produced consumer goods or matériel. Indeed fewer than expected candidates used the date to make a point about the need for increased production.

Question 1(e)

There were some good answers to this question and the question proved to be a good discriminator. The majority of candidates were able to explain the importance of the propaganda both in terms of the power of Hitler as a speaker and the spectacle of the Nazi meetings. Many candidates identified a dislike of Weimar as a reason for supporting Hitler and the Nazis. A frequent point made was that many Germans welcomed the work that the Nazis provided and the fall in unemployment. Most candidates' responses demonstrated the use of the sources selectively and appropriately in their answer. The point that occurred in many answers was about fear. This had two aspects; firstly there was a fear of the SA and their violence and intimidation. Secondly candidates referred to the fear of Communism which kept the support of many Germans.

There were some candidates who wrote at length about why there was little or no opposition. When answers consisted of a few simple points or general statements about support for the Nazis they were limited to level 1 marks. Many candidates offered some more developed comments from their own knowledge about the reasons that the Nazis received support. These answers usually received 3 to 5 marks at level 2. Examiners noted some good answers that emphasised the 'carrot and stick' approach to retaining the support of the German people. For candidates who were able to give factual support and details about several factors 6 to 8 marks were available. Some very good answers were seen in which candidates showed how Nazis presented themselves as defenders of traditional German values and offered the promise of restoring Germany's greatness after the defeat in World War One and the Weimar period; this appealed to the German people and gained their support. At level 4 candidates tended to evaluate different factors and give some weight to their relative importance.

Section B

Question 2(a)

Many candidates answered this question. It was answered well on the whole, with many candidates scoring level 2 marks. Most candidates reached level 2 by showing what was required, namely a knowledge of the Constitution rather than of the government of Weimar Germany. Candidates tended to explain the Constitution's Proportional Representation, Article 48, the 7 year Presidency, and which citizens had the franchise. Really good answers described

how some of these features might lead to unstable coalition governments and the easy exercise of arbitrary power.

Question 2(b)

This question drew many very good answers from the majority of candidates who tackled it. Many candidates relied on Source F as a `starter` and pointed out that the defenceless old man appeared as Weimar was – defenceless. This led on to a discussion of the French Invasion of the Ruhr and how unpopular that would make the government for having ‘allowed’ it to happen. A main feature of answers to this question was the Treaty of Versailles, the clauses and signing of which engendered the Weimar government’s unpopularity. Another prominent feature of candidates’ responses was the list of rebellions all of which contributed to a sense that the government was not in control and therefore disliked. Although mentioned, candidates sometimes lacked the specific detail about why these events would have affected the government’s popularity. At level 3 candidates were able convincingly to explain why the events would have adversely affected the popularity of the government.

Question 2(c)

This question discriminated well and attracted some very knowledgeable and well explained answers. Candidates who knew some simple details about the Stresemann were rewarded at level 1 or 2 depending on whether the knowledge was used to explain or describe his impact. Many answers were focussed on the economic measures that he took to deal with the instability after the First World War. There seemed to be a weaker grasp on the part of candidates of Stresemann’s role in restoring Germany’s international standing. Examiners were looking for the emergence of some evaluation of the relative importance of factors at level 3 and beyond. At level 3 and beyond candidates were often able to show an understanding of the attitude and actions of the USA and the element of luck enjoyed by Stresemann before 1929.

Question 3(a)

This was a popular and straightforward question. At a simple level there was recognition that von Papen was connected with Hitler gaining some real political power. Better level 2 answers clearly showed that candidates knew some details about the power struggle between von Papen and von Schleicher. The most frequent reference was that Hindenburg was persuaded by von Papen to allow him to form a government with Hitler as Chancellor because von Papen could control Hitler and the Nazi influence.

Question 3(b)

Candidates were given a great deal of help in the picture provided. Source G was quite rightly ‘mined’ by many candidates who used it to comment on the opposition based upon the violence of the Nazis as displayed in the picture. There were many references in answers to Jewish opposition or opposition because of the Nazis’ racist ideas and activities. Marks were gained by candidates who speculated that the body on the floor might be of a political opponent, such as a Communist or a Social Democrat; this often led to level 3 marks. At level 3 candidates explained that there were ideological differences for the political opposition to the Nazis – the Social Democrats and the *Reichsbanner* organisation were frequently mentioned.

Question 3(c)

The question was straightforward and some candidates enjoyed the opportunity to display their understanding. This was less popular than Question 2(c). At level 1, candidates just had a few points to make usually about the Enabling Act. Most candidates had knowledge and understanding about a number of factors especially the Reichstag Fire, and the Night of the Long Knives. Some candidates asserted that there were several factors, often that there were more important factors than the Enabling Act but then failed to explain how these had an impact. Those answers that tended to mention several factors briefly were rewarded at level 2. Some candidates at level 2 were very knowledgeable about either the Enabling Act or the Reichstag Fire. The former often developed to explain that Hitler could make laws after the passing of the Enabling Act and Hitler did not have to return to the Reichstag to approve laws. In this way the Enabling Act was used to strengthen his dictatorship.

At level 3 candidates discussed the other elements in creating a complete dictatorship. They needed a secure grasp of the impact of the Reichstag Fire, Enabling Act and the Night of the Long Knives. Candidates reaching level 4 determined the mark they received by the relative significance they attached to different factors and the supporting detail that appeared in their answers. The absence of an understanding of the exact chronology for this period let some candidates down, particularly the death of Hindenburg and the army's oath of allegiance. Another weakness was the differences between the SA and the regular army. It is pleasing to report that examiners noted how some candidates produced outstanding responses to this question. The better answers at level 3 and 4 did appreciate the role of luck and opportunism in making Hitler dictator after January 1933 or made relevant connections between the various causes of Hitler's dictatorship.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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