
AS-LEVEL HISTORY

Component 7041/1D
Report on the Examination

Specification 7041
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Component 7041/1D

Stuart Britain and the Crisis of Monarchy, 1603–1702 **Component 1D: Absolutism challenged: Britain, 1603–1649**

General Comments

The challenges of the new examination were generally well handled. In the new ‘interpretations question’ there was a tendency for some students to drift in to general summary of the extracts rather than isolate and explain the overall argument of each extract and then provide a breakdown of how the historian constructed and supported that argument as part of an analysis with deployment of context to assess how convincing the interpretations were. It may be helpful for students to attempt to explain in one sentence what each extract is actually arguing before then analysing that interpretation. For the strongest responses there was a real selection of contextual knowledge.

Similarly for the essay questions the strongest responses could illustrate their responses with well selected precise evidence. While on a breadth paper there is no expectation of a range of depth of evidence there is an expectation across 45 minutes in an essay that students will be able to use a range of precisely selected examples to illustrate their argument across the themes and periods of the questions.

Section A

Question 01

A key issue for some students was grasping the key focus of Smith in Extract A on the structural issues with the financial system which inflation then exacerbated. Those who able to comment on this key aspect of early modern finances with good contextual support clearly showed a good understanding of the extract. Many were helped in an appreciation of this by a focus on the Great Contract of 1610 as the one attempt before 1688 to seriously attempt to reform the Crown’s structural financial weaknesses. Many were able to support reference to feudal or prerogative income with selected examples. There was some good comment on the reference to inflation with typical support derived from Cecil’s updating of the Book of Rates to partially take account of its impact.

More students were able to appreciate the focus in Extract B on the impact of James’s extravagance. They were also able to deploy a range of contextual knowledge as part of assessing this, many focusing on favourites or the ‘double supper’ as illustration. Stronger responses assessed the extract in the context of the political reasons for James’s extravagance, especially in the early years of his reign with his need to appease the political nation. Others set his extravagance in the context of the flourishing cultural life of his court.

The strongest responses were able to link the structural problems outlined in Extract A with the impact of inflation and the focus in Extract B on James’s extravagance. Some did this through developing the focus on the failure of the Great Contract from MPs reticence in granting James a more regular income from reform given his inability to curb his extravagance.

Section B

Question 02

Stronger responses covered both monarchs and made a direct assessment not just between James I and Charles I but also across different periods for James. Some used 1618 as more of a turning point than 1625 due to the impact of the Thirty Years' War. Stronger responses also were able to assess both monarchs in the context of the concept of the Jacobethan balance as a means to view the differing approaches of the first Stuart monarchs. In general those who dealt with confidence with concepts such as Arminianism or anti-Catholicism alongside well selected precise evidence were also illustrative of strong responses. Selection over 40 minutes across the period 1603 to 1629 was also more indicative of stronger responses with many students showing a sound appreciation of the major religious events/issues such as, the Millenary Petition, Hampton Court Conference, Bancroft's Canons, the King James Bible, the development of Arminianism, Montagu and the York House Conference. Others showed a good appreciation of the importance of individuals like Andrewes or Laud.

Question 03

A general issue with some responses to this question was a lack of coverage across the range of the period. Some students did not address the period after the outbreak of civil war in 1642. A key example used well in the majority of stronger responses was the Engagement of 1647. This was used in the context of Ireton's direct negotiation with Charles over his and the New Model's Heads of the Proposals. Charles's refusal of Ireton's Proposals and subsequent agreement with the Scots was a turning point in trust that made the regicide possible as shown by the Windsor Prayer Meeting of April 1648. A key starting point for many was the 1628 Petition of Right and how Charles's actions raised the question of his duplicity. Students' selection of evidence across the period was most credited when shaped to set up comment on the issue of trust.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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