
AS-LEVEL HISTORY

Component 7041/2E
Report on the Examination

Specification 7041
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Component 7041/2E

The English Revolution, 1625–1660

Component 2E The origins of the English Civil War, 1625–1642

General Comments

General essay writing technique is an issue that limits some students. This is particularly clear in general narrative introductions and in limited shaping comment to the specific wording of the question. Many students would also benefit from considering the basic structuring of their essays into paragraphs, and even within their paragraphs by making clear the theme of that paragraph, the evidence and the comment. On a depth paper there is also an expectation that over 40 minutes that a student will be able to undertake quite a precise illustration of their argument in response to the specific question set. On the other hand, there was little indication that students were pressed for time to complete their answers. The comments which follow are indicative of some of the strengths and weaknesses commonly seen in students' answers in this session. Question 01 has been addressed in some detail so as to provide teachers with further guidance as to what helped produce a good answer in this new style of question.

Section A

Question 1

There were three elements to this question: an evaluation of provenance and tone, an evaluation of content and argument (both requiring some application of own knowledge) and a comparison. Although these three elements did not need to be addressed in equal measure, and it was sufficient for the comparison to emerge in the conclusion (although many good responses did maintain a comparative element throughout the answer), something of each was expected (although not always found) in answers.

There was excellent comment, with integrated context, on provenance, language and tone in the strongest responses. Good understanding of the nature of an Ambassador's access and purpose was usefully commented for Source A. Most picked up on the limiting nature of the date of the source. With regard to Source B there were good links made between Hutchinson's views as a Puritan and wife of a regicide with the tone and language used in the Source. This integration of comment on provenance and tone with historical context should be central to analysis when considering primary sources.

Development of source analysis would come from more precise and supported analysis which can focus on provenance and tone. Setting consideration of this in secure historical context adds more weight to assessment of the sources. Students need to be reminded that comments on provenance, as much as those on content, need support. Simple statements of 'unreliability' or 'bias' were insufficient.

In terms of the comparison, students who merely asserted the superiority of one source over another, talked of the 'validity' – usually meaning accuracy of content – of the sources, or, in a few cases, simply ignored the requirement to address comparison, showed little understanding of what this question asked for.

Section B**Question 02**

Students were able to deal effectively and with good illustration of how Laud could be considered to have weakened the church. Most did this through reference to examples of opposition, most notably Puritan discontent or the Scottish Rebellion. Many dealt effectively with the concept of strengthening through reference to conformity, order or even restoration of fabric. The strongest responses were able to set the 'beauty of holiness' in a more precise context of the nature of Puritanism and studies of the impact of Laudianism. In doing so they argued that for the vast majority of the population, attending church because it was compulsory and not drawn to the demands of Puritanism, the more visual and ceremonial aspects of Laudianism had real appeal.

Question 03

The most effective responses set the development of royalist support in reaction to Pym's religious radicalism in the broader context of the key concept of Constitutional Royalism. As part of this clear links were made between religious radicalism and political radicalism. Stronger responses focused on key issues and events that divided the political nation from their general unity in 1640, most notably, the Root and Branch Petition, Stafford's trial and execution, the impact of the Irish Rebellion, Militia Bill, Grand Remonstrance and 19 Propositions. There was also useful comment on the perception of Pym as a potential demagogue exploiting the London Mob and becoming known as 'King Pym'.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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