
AS

History

7041/20

Report on the Examination

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General comments

There was clear evidence that the majority of students had been prepared well for the AS examination, now in its second year, and students mostly responded well to the demands of the paper, especially in Q01 where comparison of the extracts, in terms of value, was much more evident. Students were able to write at greater length for both the extract question and also for the essay response. The overall quality of responses was positive and encouraging, with many students demonstrating good understanding of the period. The essay question on the fear of communism (Q03) was slightly more popular than the one on Weimar political stability (Q02). Whilst the majority of students displayed an impressive grasp of content, fewer were able to select appropriate and relevant evidence in support of an analysis that was closely focused on the questions posed. As a depth paper, the more successful students demonstrated an appreciation of precise detail and supporting evidence and clear focus of the timeframes shown in the questions.

Section A

01

The best responses were able to identify the overall argument presented in each source, with the weaker responses adopting a line-by-line approach. The weakest responses usually only addressed one or two statements in each source rather than gaining an overall understanding of the interpretation and what the author was trying to say. There was plenty of evidence of provenance and tone and, in the better answers, these were clearly linked to value. Unfortunately, weaker answers were very generalised in terms of tone and provenance which did not address the key idea of value. Many students wrote with confidence about the very positive Source A and the very hostile and negative view given in B and were able to understand their views by both discussing the provenance and emphasis, but also by using accurate contextual information and own knowledge around the timeframe of 1918 and the revolutionary period around the end of the war. As a depth paper, it is important that students do not just compare the sources and give general provenance and tone, without rooting their answers in contextual knowledge of substance.

Whilst better responses considered the interpretation of each source as a whole and focused on the question posed i.e. extent of support for the new Republic of 1918, some students became side-tracked into giving stock answers on the problems facing the Weimar Republic up to, and even beyond 1923. Good answers moved from an overall summary to a breakdown of the interpretation given in each source, in relation to its key judgements. For example, there was an evaluation, in Extract B, that the revolution had been 'strangled' and that the new government was 'working against the proletariat' whereas in Extract A, the emphasis is on the trust of the workers and that the 'victory of the people has been achieved.' Following this approach, comparison was sound and meaningful. To conclude, strong answers managed to combine clear and meaningful understanding of the views given in the two sources, valid and developed provenance and tone linked precisely to value and substantial use of contextual knowledge to help form comparisons as to which source was the most valuable for the purpose of the question.

Section B

02

The best responses to this question focused precisely on the focal point of 'political stability' and the extent to which the Weimar Republic failed to achieve it between 1924 and 1928. These answers were able to provide balanced assessment on how stable the Republic became in these years and whether fundamental problems remained. Weaker answers could not build a balanced

argument on this aspect and veered too often into 'Golden Age' responses, incorporating economic and international aspects. Lack of clear relevance was an issue with this question; those students who did look at these other areas but tried to explicitly link this back to political stability, were given some credit.

03

There were some excellent answers to this question from students who had a clear focus on the challenge posed by communism between 1930 and 1932 and whether the fear that this generated was the key reason for Nazism's growing support. These good answers were then able to contrast this factor with the range of other reasons for the growth of Nazism in this period. Less successful responses gave far more generalised responses on Hitler's rise to power without the focus, which is to be expected in a depth paper, on the short timeframe of 1930-32. Sadly, some students also under-performed by offering one-sided essays, lacking the knowledge or understanding to meaningfully explain and analyse the fear of communism as a factor.

Students need to be reminded that all essay answers require argument and a balanced appraisal and that one-sided answers will not reach the higher mark ranges.

Use of statistics

Statistics used in this report may be taken from incomplete processing data. However, this data still gives a true account on how students have performed for each question.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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