

A-level **History**

7042/1D Stuart Britain and the Crisis of Monarchy, 1603–1702
Report on the Examination

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General Comments

The scripts suggested that some candidates did make good use of the time allowed, approximately 15 minutes, for reading and noting on the extracts in preparation for writing their responses on how convincing they found the arguments put forward. Furthermore there was clear evidence of candidates planning their essay response, even at a limited structural level, and this, generally, facilitated responses that addressed more of the key elements required in a balanced argument. The majority of candidates showed a good appreciation of some of the key concepts of the period as well being able to provide sound overviews of key content for all 3 essay questions. While the majority chose to answer Q2 and then Q4 those who answered Q3 usually produced strong responses. Very few candidates failed to complete all required elements of the paper. Those who struggled to complete a second essay appeared to do so because of overlong responses to the extracts.

Question 1/extracts – James I monarchy

The strongest responses to the extracts structured their answers clearly, focused on convincing and used direct evaluation from selected historical context. Strong responses were marked by an opening sentence that summarised the extract. Candidates then tended to break the extract in to 3 supporting elements for that overall summary, each of which was assessed against historical context. The approach of taking each extract in turn served the vast majority of candidates well. The strongest responses were marked by their focus on convincing and clear use of evaluative comment on the argument of the extract linked to precisely selected context. Where candidates appreciated that Christopher Hill was a Marxist historian, or Davies had probably more of a Whig view, and linked this to the language or argument of the extract, credit was given.

Q2 – essay – finances

The majority of candidates tackled this question well. There were strong overviews of key methods of finance for both monarchs. Most argued that in financial terms at least Charles was the most successful but stronger responses did set this in the broader context of the discontent his fiscal feudalism generated and the limits of regime exposed by his retreat from war in 1629 and 1630 and collapse of his regime when faced with the military threat of the Covenanters after 1637. Stronger responses also referenced the structural problems of the early modern state and the impact of inflation. In considering this some provided good comment on the question of reform, notably through reference to the Great Contract or Charles's creative use of prerogative income in the 1630s.

Q3 – essay – religious radicalism

While the least popular essay question on the paper those who chose to respond to this usually did so with strong arguments. The majority of candidates showed a good appreciation of the range of religion across the period and were able to focus on the Scottish Rebellion and the Clarendon Code as their book ends. Many naturally weighted their essays to the radicalism of the late 1640s and early 1650s with some excellent treatments of the New Model Army or millenarians. The Quakers were also central to many essays with some well supported material on their change from Naylor's leadership, the height of the Quaker fear to the post-Restoration pacificism of Fox's leadership. There were also some impressive reflections on Milton as an illustrative example of the 'experience of defeat' and the decline of millenarian activism as a result of 1660.

Q4 – 1678-1702 transformation

While there were many good responses to this question it was also marked by having more that were briefer, probably as a reflection of being the last response for the majority of the candidates. Another element of this was, however, that some candidates did struggle with the range of the question, particularly the period before the Glorious Revolution. Stronger responses considered the Exclusion Crisis and then the years 1681-85 in relation to how they reflected the power of Charles II and the Political Nation. Candidates then contrasted the stronger superficial position James destroyed through his religious and political policies before focusing on the changes under William. Most rightly stressed that most change came from the financial revolution under William that institutionalised Parliament. Stronger responses referenced the power of the Political Nation throughout and saw the post 1689 period as more of a formalisation of that power through the construction of a fiscal-military state. Some commented on this actually providing William as a monarch with more real power even if it was within a more constitutional than absolutist structure.

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.