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Examiners' Report June 2010

GCSE History 5HA02 2A

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Introduction

There was a pleasing improvement in performance on this paper compared to that in the January 2010 session. This is not surprising since candidates sitting this paper were doing so after one year's study, rather than one term's, as had been the case in January. Assessment standards remain constant through the two year period of study, but as centres will be aware, the maturation level of candidates can play an important part in their performance. Equally many centres may have used the opportunities provided by the January examination and Edexcel guidance thereafter to reinforce their teaching on examination technique. Whatever the reason, it was highly encouraging to see the candidates adapting to the new examination with few difficulties.

Individual questions are discussed below, but there are several introductory points which should be made before looking at the performance on those questions.

As stated in January, candidates should not concern themselves with the amount of space allocated to an answer. Edexcel centres will be aware that online marking requires candidates to write within a given space. As a consequence more space is provided for each answer in the booklet than is usually needed, thus allowing for error, large writing etc. As explained below, a focused, concise response is usually more highly rewarded than a lengthy response which does not directly address the issues at hand. So candidates should not concern themselves with 'filling up the space'

Candidates should also realise that with the exception of Q1a, this paper tests their knowledge and understanding of the period studied and their ability to select relevant detail from their knowledge to answer the question set. So in preparation for this paper, it is vital to learn the topic in detail, but in answering the questions, it is equally important to spend time considering which information is to be used. Such reflection would save many candidates wasting their efforts by writing on eg Stresemann's foreign policy or the treatment of Jews after 1939 (which is actually 'off-specification').

Question 1 (a)

Performance on this question was considerably better than in January. Most candidates scored well, though a number of candidates disadvantaged themselves by writing at too great a length, identifying three or four inferences, or considering the nature, origin or purpose of the source. This question does not require source evaluation, but instead asks candidates to interpret the source content to make one inference from what they are told - and to support that inference from the source.

Weaker candidates have difficulty differentiating between what the source actually says and what we might infer from it. The example below clearly shows how this distinction can be achieved. Nowhere does the source actually say women were 'controlled' the question can be answered concisely and full marks achieved by focusing on identifying an inference and giving support from the source. (Not the candidate's own knowledge). Such an answer scores full marks.

This answer contains one well-supported inference

Germany, 1918–39

Answer Questions 1(a) to (d), then Question 2(a) OR 2(b) and then Question 3(a) OR 3(b).

Question 1 – you must answer all parts of this question.

Study Source A.

Source A: From a book on the history of Germany, published in 1985.

Women in Germany were forced to stay at home. Within months of the Nazis coming to power, many women doctors and civil servants were sacked from their jobs. Then women lawyers and teachers were dismissed. By 1939 there were few women left in professional jobs. The Nazi party tried to stop women following fashions. Make up and wearing trousers was frowned upon. Hair was to be arranged either in buns or in plaits. Slimming was discouraged because being slim was not thought to be good for having children.

(a) What can you learn from Source A about the treatment of women in Nazi Germany? (4)

I can learn from Source A that under Nazi rule the women in Germany were controlled. I can ^{know} ~~feel~~ this because it says ~~that~~ 'women in Germany were forced to stay at home' and 'hair was to be arranged either in buns or in plaits'



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Examiner Comments

Note that the answer begins with the inference 'women in Germany were controlled' and then quotes/paraphrases the source for support.



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Examiner Tip

As you can see from this example, top marks can be gained by a concise, focused response. There is no need to write at great length

Question 1 (b)

This question provides the candidates with an opportunity to provide precise historical detail on one topic or aspect of the specification. Candidates are rewarded for identifying a number of statements or features and then adding support from their contextual knowledge. One well-supported statement will be awarded 4-5 marks, depending on the quality of the support; two supported statements will be awarded 5 to 6 marks.

It is entirely up to the candidates which features of the topic they choose to address. This might be causes, events or consequences, for example. A good technique in answering this type of question is to use terms such as 'firstly' and 'secondly'. Such an approach reinforces the move from one developed statement to another.

In this particular question candidates were asked about Nazi policies towards the young. The topic was well-known and answers were generally good. Most candidates focussed on the impact of the Nazi youth movements and the changes which took place to formal education in German schools.

This answer addresses two features, Nazi youth movements and the changes which took place to formal education in German schools. The section of the answer given here shows clearly that two features are being addressed

Before 1933 there was the Hitler Youth Group which had encourage young children to join but during the Nazi governments power Nazi Youth Groups by law became compulsory and were a way for the Nazis to indoctrinate young children and keep them away from their parents which may not have been Nazi supporters.

The education system became nationalised and focused of racial science and sport for boys, and how to be a perfect wife/mother for women. The new education system the Nazis enforced meant young believed that, as it had shown in books, Hitler as the saviour of Germany and a father to them.



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Examiner Comments

Although the answer is not well constructed, it does contain sufficient information to gain a high Level Two (there is more detail given outside the quoted area)



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Examiner Tip

The answer would be more focussed if it stated that 'One feature was....' and then gave all the necessary information before adding 'A second feature was...'

Question 1 (c)

The focus of this question is consequence. Candidates are asked to explain the impact of an event or policy, rather than just writing on that effect or policy itself. Weak answers tend to list without providing supporting detail, but the majority of candidates are able to reach Level 2 by supporting their statements with relevant contextual knowledge. One supported consequence will be awarded 3-4 marks, depending on the quality of the support; two supported consequences will be awarded 4-5 marks. Where improvement can be made is in establishing links between the effects being explained, or in being able to give an overview of the impact of Stresemann's economic policies. In doing this they move from Level 2 to Level 3.

This question highlighted a need for candidates to read the question with care to understand precisely what they are asked to do. The question asked about economic policy, but some candidates wrote about Stresemann's work in general, covering foreign policy as well. Stresemann's foreign policy could be seen to have played an important role in creating an environment in which his economic policies flourished, but most candidates did not choose to make that link. As a result, the information they provided on foreign policy was not relevant.

The answer correctly identifies that the main areas for discussion are the Rentenmark, Dawes Plan and Young

greatly helped ~~the~~ Germany. Firstly and most importantly Stresemann tackled the economic hyperinflation crisis by introducing the Rentenmark. This stopped the mad wage changes of the year before and the devaluation of the economy. It was based on land rather than gold, so increased the stability of Germany's economy. Lastly the Rentenmark put an end to the plight of the middle classes who had ~~to~~ meaningless savings from the inflation by starting afresh.

Next Stresemann signed a number of plans with outside countries, namely the Dawes plan and the Young plan. These were beneficial for Germany since its effects meant that Germany had firstly more money in circulation (800 million

marks from the American Dawes plan.)
this helped the economy to recover since
banks had more money to be lending. And
lastly the ~~1924~~ Young Plan which cut the
amount of money having to be repaid

down and increased the amount of years
that their reparations could be ~~paid~~ paid
back. This made a difference since Germany
no longer had to scrounge for as much money,
relieving taxes and helping the lower classes.



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Examiner Comments

Whilst more detail might have been provided, the answer reaches the lower end of Level 3 by commenting (though superficially) on the impact, rather than just the work, of Stresemann



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Examiner Tip

Clear differentiation is established between the various points by the use of 'firstly' and 'next'. This is good practice

Question 1 (d)

This question focusses on causation. Candidates are not asked to give details of the event, person or policy in the question. Instead they are asked to explain why something happened. As in the previous question, Level 2 marks are awarded for identifying and supporting an answer with contextual knowledge. One supported reason will be awarded 3-4 marks, depending on the quality of the support; two supported reasons will be awarded 4-5 marks. Level 3 is reserved for those that can then give a more sophisticated explanation of the importance of the reasons given. Why were these reasons particularly important, was any one more important than the others, is there a link between them? Candidates who could work at this level scored very high marks on this question.

This answer provides a very good balance between the political, territorial and economic impacts of the Treaty and their role in causing resentment in Germany

signed the ~~conditions~~ of ~~November 1917~~ they were called 'The November Criminals'. Another reason for the German people's anger was that the Treaty limited Germany once a proud and strong country, into being weak, with few resources and ~~the~~ ^{few} defenses. The German army was limited to 100,000 men, they were allowed no airforce or submarines and only 6 battleships - they would be unable to defend themselves if attacked. The Treaty also crippled Germany economically, demanding reparations of £6,600 million from a country who had used up their gold resources in the war. In addition to this, Germany lost 15% of their coalmines, 50% of their iron mines and 13% of their land, as well as all of their colonies. The

German people were angry and bitter as they saw the national humiliation of losing the war, the betrayal by the politicians and the Treaty of Versailles as all linked.



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Examiner Comments

Each of the areas is well-supported and there is a good attempt to link the causes to the outcome, particularly towards the end of the answer. This takes it into Level 3. To score top marks, however, a degree of prioritisation is necessary.



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Examiner Tip

When asked to give reasons, always think about which of those reasons were the most important.

Question 2 (a)

Questions 2a and 2b are 'process' questions. Candidates are asked to select one of two questions requiring them to explain 'how' a particular event, policy or trend occurred. As in earlier questions, candidates are required to identify ways and to support them with relevant contextual knowledge. One supported statement will be awarded 3-4 marks, depending on the quality of the support; two supported statements will be awarded 4-5 marks.

Candidates answering Q2a had little difficulty identifying the Reichstag Fire as an opportunity for Hitler to take control and the use of the Enabling Act and Night of the Long Knives to reinforce that control. There was significant irrelevant biographical detail on van der Lubbe, but generally this question was well-answered.

This answer identifies the Reichstag Fire and Night of the Long Knives as the steps to power

Hitler was able to overcome opposition to his government because ~~firstly~~ in 1933 there was the reichstag fire. This fire helped Hitler because communists were blamed. The communist leader was arrested and many communists were killed. Therefore Hitlers ~~got rid of~~ opposition were gone, the fire ended up helping Hitler in his rise to power.

In 1934 there was 'The night of the long knives'. This was when Hitler and the SS killed 1000's of SA's as they were a threat to Hitler. He got away with this as he told the public that the SA were a threat to them,

and he was protecting them.
Therefore in the years 1933-34 Hitler was able to overcome the opposition; communists and the SA.



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Examiner Comments

Some explanation is given on how these helped Hitler come to power, but it is superficial and undeveloped. Consequently, the answer remained in Level 2



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Examiner Tip

To reach Level 3, answers should make clear and supported links between the statement being made and the general outcome.

Question 2 (b)

Question 2b was less popular and some of those candidates who answered it wandered into a discussion on the treatment of Jews after the introduction of the Final Solution. Those who wrote within the correct time span concentrated on the Nuremberg Laws and Kristallnacht. Best answers identified how in this period the position of Jews deteriorated from being integrated in German society to abused and isolated non-citizens.

This answer addresses the two main factors involved in limiting the rights of the Jews, the Nuremberg Laws and Kristallnacht.

There was a progression, and the anti-Jewish policies became more and more ~~official~~ pronounced. The Nuremberg laws in 1935 marked a significant change to Jews when they were passed. The laws more or less took away Jewish citizenship, reducing them to aliens in their own country. They had no longer

the same rights as everyone else did, and were now officially denied citizenship. But they were still not really being ~~fully~~



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Examiner Comments

Both factors are supported from contextual knowledge and the candidate has been able to demonstrate that change took place. Consequently the answer is marked at Level Three.



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Examiner Tip

When answering a 'change' question candidates should not just provide the necessary historical information, but should explain how that information shows a change.

Question 3 (a)

Questions 3a and 3b are, in effect, ‘essay’ questions. Candidates are asked to select one of two questions requiring them to explain the relative importance of a number of factors linked to causation or effect. It is extremely important that candidates are aware of how they should test for relative importance. In this question some candidates simply provide detail about the given, or their own, factors. Such an approach will not result in high marks. If there is an explanation of how the factors helped bring about the stated outcome, then such an approach may result in a mark at the top of Level 2. Where no such explanation is given, low Level 2 or Level 1 marks will be awarded. Candidates need to be aware that they cannot reach Level 3 without prioritising the factors given (ie they cannot score more than half marks on this question). Equally, they should be aware that relative importance comes from comparing the importance of two or more factors. Explaining that ‘x was the most important because it had this impact’ is not addressing relative importance, but is merely reinforcing the explanation given in Level 2. Where candidates can explain why, for example, the growth of unemployment was more important than the fear of communism in winning support for the Nazis, then Level 3 marks are awarded. Where three or more factors are compared, or an understanding of the causal web created by all the factors is shown, then Level 4 is achieved.

The answer below has been trimmed for space reasons. The missing text explains how each factor contributed to the growth of support for the Nazis. On its own such an answer would have been awarded at top Level 2 mark.

In conclusion, I think the unemployment rates gave a lot of support to the Nazis but, I do not think that it is the main reason why the party became powerful. I do think it is in fact a combination of excellent propaganda, the frightful SA and the unemployment rates. Without these things the Nazis would not have got any support. If there was no propaganda, then the Nazis could not influence anything. This meant that no-one would have heard of the Nazi party and many would be supportive of other parties. Without the SA, other parties would not have been abolished, meaning the only party to support was Hitler. Though, unemployment meant that many were unhappy with the government which made people want the government change and they were more likely to listen to what the Nazis had to say. There is no main reason. The reasons are all as important as each other.



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Examiner Comments

The final paragraph takes the answer into Level 4. Not only is relative importance considered, but the candidate shows clearly how the factors worked together.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates should try not to stop their explanation when all four factors have been covered. Top marks come with an analysis of the comparative importance of those factors

Question 3 (b)

Question 3b was significantly less popular than Question 3a, but those candidates who did attempt it were able to explain the reasons why the given factors were a problem for the Weimar Republic. They often found it difficult, however, to prioritise those problems. Where this was done well, it was usually by establishing that the French Occupation of the Ruhr had a greater long-term impact.

This answer addresses the given factors but also includes reference to other factors - a perfectly valid approach

The Spartacist uprising was not the most important problem faced by the Weimar Republic, they ~~were~~ ~~quite~~ were disorganised and the uprising didn't ~~seem~~ end up becoming a big problem. There were many problems that contributed to the fall of the Weimar Republic. The 'stab in the back' theory was quite a big problem for the Weimar Republic because it turned the German people against them in the first place and many Germans blamed them for the Germany losing the war and the signing of the Treaty of Versailles. The Treaty of Versailles was a really big problem because it linked many of the problems together and started quite a lot like because the reparations were ~~so~~ ~~big~~ such a large amount the government couldn't pay it so they printed more money which led to hyper-inflation and poverty within Germany. Hyper Inflation was a huge problem for Germany as it was entirely the government's fault for printing more money also what made it worse was at the same time the French invaded and occupied the Ruhr which

was an important industrial area for Germany and meant they had even less money. Also there were other uprisings in Germany like the Munich Putsch 1923 where Hitler the Nazi Party went to a beer hall meeting and demanded power, they agreed but afterwards rejected the Nazis and sent Hitler to prison. Out of all these problems I think the worst is the Treaty of Versailles because this sparked off a load more problems and was designed to seriously weaken Germany. Also it made ~~the~~ German people against the government.

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Examiner Comments

There is a very superficial attempt to establish the importance of the Treaty of Versailles at the end of the essay, but it is not sufficient to take the answer out of Level 2.

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Examiner Tip

Candidates should try not to stop their explanation when all four factors have been covered. Top marks come with an analysis of the comparative importance of those factors

Grade Boundaries

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Raw mark boundary	100	38	34	30	26	22	19	16	13	0
Uniform mark scale boundary	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	0

A* is only used in conversion from raw to uniform marks. It is not a published unit grade.

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