

AS

# HISTORY

7041/2L: Italy and Fascism c1900 - 1945  
Report on the Examination

---

7041  
June 2019

---

Version: 1.0

---

---

Further copies of this Report are available from [aqa.org.uk](http://aqa.org.uk)

Copyright © 2019 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered schools/colleges for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to schools/colleges to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

## General comments

This exam had a smaller entry number again this year, but one of good quality. The students' responses showed evidence of good preparation and commitment. The sources and questions all proved to be accessible and answers were notable for their precision of support and effective structure. An increasing number of students are seeing that a source does not have to be 'correct' in order to be 'valuable'. Some issues persist. A weakness in 01, for some students, is that the sources are treated as extracts and only examined for their content, often line by line, rather than examined holistically for their value to the historian. Essay questions require balance, appropriate to the issue. Students should be discouraged from wholly agreeing or disagreeing with a given viewpoint.

### Question 01

The Matteotti Crisis is a popular topic and well known. Both sources proved to be accessible with few issues of comprehension. Good contextual knowledge was used to evaluate the provenance and content of Mussolini's speech with regard to the circumstances in which the speech was made. This was both in the possible impact of the ultimatum given by the Ras in December 1924 and in the nature of the parliament Mussolini was addressing, being after the Aventine Secession. Thoughtful comments were made about the Times newspaper as a source for this issue. Some students showed awareness of the attitude adopted by this newspaper on previous occasions.

A weakness in some responses to this question was to overlook the particular issue given in the question. Sources were used to describe rather than explain Mussolini's response. Such answers tended not to see the sources as a whole but as a series of separate statements, which could be individually challenged or supported. The sources offered a clear contrast in Mussolini's possible motives.

### Question 02

This was the less popular of the essay questions but was answered with equal success. Students showed a familiarity with a range of issues affecting Italy c1900. Stronger answers were able to develop a more prolonged case for the importance of the north-south divide, often linking in to other factors. Balance was achieved by introducing alternative issues, political and economic weaknesses being the most common. Very good answers were seen which argued that the issues were inter-connected, for example the growing economic division between the north and south due to the lack of investment in infrastructure in the south, and the relative under-representation of the people of the south due to the restricted franchise. As always, students were rewarded for their precision in their knowledge and argument, which led to convincing judgements.

### Question 03

Italy's involvement in World War One is a topic that the students had been prepared for and many thorough answers were seen, encompassing military and diplomatic failures, social division and economic problems. Stronger answers focussed on the war years and immediately after, showing good knowledge of how the war affected Italy. The standard response was to agree that the war was a failure, with differing degrees of emphasis, but more discerning answers were able to show balance with evidence of success. This included the government reforms of 1918 after the dismissal of Cadorna and military victory. There was also a recognition that sectors of the Italian

economy had prospered under the war conditions. There was good understanding of the 'mutilated victory'.

Centres could give more attention to the Treaty of London and to an assessment of what Italy achieved in 1919. South Tyrol, Trentino and Istria were promised to Italy and given. Italy became a permanent member of the League of Nations Council and the disintegration of Austria-Hungary took away the threat on the northern border which had existed since 1961. It can be argued that Italy achieved its war aims more successfully than any other victorious nation.

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

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