



A-LEVEL HISTORY

7042/1C: The Tudors: England, 1485-1603
Report on the Examination

7042
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General

There were some very high-level responses to this paper which demonstrated conceptual understanding and an impressive breadth of knowledge. Increasingly, students have become aware of the nature of this paper which examines breadth. More effective answers showed an understanding of developments over a span of at least twenty years. This was particularly evident when the question was based on an examination of a single reign. Students generally selected supporting contextual knowledge, only occasionally choosing to focus on a narrow issue or time period, rather than the question set. However, there was a more obvious lack of awareness on the Key Questions which form the basis of this Paper 1 component and on which each of the questions on the paper focused. This does, at times, mean that the students missed key arguments. This was seen on question 01, where some students did not understand the difference between government and Parliament. There was still a continuing uncertainty about religious change over the period, which is also a key question; England did not become protestant immediately on the break with Rome. The mid-Tudor crisis of Edward and Mary's reigns was seen as an issue, but this period is, in itself, less than twenty years and the issues and key questions require a broader understanding.

There were some well written responses which used academic style with confidence. The majority of answers were clear in their presentation. A small number over-used quotations from historians as a substitute for analysis. (These were particularly redundant in answer to 01 where the students were given historians' arguments to evaluate). More concerning, was the over-use of terminology and modern jargon, such as 'show-casing'; which Geoffrey Elton, for one, probably never used.

Question 1: Using your understanding of the historical context, assess how convincing the arguments in these extracts are in relation to Henry VII's methods of government.

Students responded well to the question which required them to assess how convincingly the three historians argued a case in relation to Henry VII's methods of government. Extract A by Elton, which looked at Henry's control of central government machinery was consistently the best evaluated extract. Extract B which looked at Henry's use of Parliament was less well done. The third extract which looked at the use of local government produced some good analyses of the work of JPs.

An increasing number of students approach this task by establishing the arguments within the extracts which they find convincing, then addressing the views in the extracts with which they disagree, and finally offering an overall evaluation of the convincingness of the historian's argument. Although overly-mechanical answers are not always successful, many who adopted this approach were able to access the higher levels. Fewer students tried to compare the extracts; a skill not required by the A Level question. Conclusions are not strictly necessary, provided substantiated judgement is shown throughout an answer, but where a relevant comment on an extract was made in a conclusion, credit was given.

A small percentage of students responded to O1 by paraphrasing the extracts with only limited comment and limited amounts of contextual knowledge. A larger percentage examined the points made by the historians but did not focus on the methods of government (as required by the question) and were indiscriminate in the contextual knowledge which they gave. It is important that students select views with which they agree, or disagree, and provide appropriate evidence, rather than including material which is tangential or is not made relevant in the response. Students were not rewarded for challenging the extracts on the basis of pure omission. This is a frequent practice and is not rewarded unless that omission is made explicitly relevant to the extract's argument. It is

helpful if students read the whole of the extract first rather than analysing line by line which undermines the evaluation of the whole argument. This problem was particularly significant in answers to Extract B

In response to Extract A, the majority of students were able to demonstrate the methods by which Henry VII established himself as a 'strong and independent king' through his control of the Council. Many were able to challenge Elton's claim that the councillors 'did his will' through referencing the betrayal of Stanley's backing for Perkin Warbeck. Some students suggested that Henry's creation of the Privy Chamber was a sign of weakness not strength. There was much discussion of the Council Learned in the Law, although some tried to argue that it was a separate council and so challenged Elton's argument. There was some misunderstanding of Elton's use of the word 'great' which was a modern-day value judgement on their usefulness, rather than their position in a hierarchy.

More effective answers to Extract B showed the limitations of Parliament, in order to support the extract comment, 'little or nothing of much significance occurred'. More effective responses were able to point to the contradiction in Extract B, commenting on Henry's need for Parliament. Some students, who followed a line-by-line approach, missed this element. They either ignored it or were forced to back track. There was a good knowledge of the extraordinary expenditure granted by Parliament for intervention in Brittany and Scotland. There was greater confusion as to what could be granted by Parliament and what were feudal dues. Clearly, Acts of Attainder and the Restitution of Crown Lands were key actions of Parliament. It is unlikely, however, that Henry could have managed solely on the monies raised by the Council Learned in the Law, as some students suggested. Few students challenged the extract on the issue that few of the statutes were of major importance, by considering limitations on retaining, although some did consider tonnage and poundage, the Navigation Acts and the acts against Enclosure. The most problematic of the evaluations confused government and parliament which made the answers difficult to reward.

Extract C answers, in the main, demonstrated a good knowledge of the role of JPs and their responsibilities during the reign of Henry VII. These answers contained contextual knowledge about the roles of JPs and their work. Some students did not see this extract as an argument about local government, although the focus was re-enforced throughout. Rather, they challenged the efficacy of JPs by referring to the impact of the Council Learned in the Law, and the work of Empson and Dudley in particular. This enabled them to suggest that Henry did not end the corruption of justice but increased it. There was some good contextual knowledge displayed about the extent to which Henry had established his authority in the localities. Many students showed a good understanding of the limits of his policy of centralisation by referring to the extent of the Percys' power in the north. However, Extract C does state, 'by the end of his reign, Henry had not...' so using the Yorkshire Rebellion or even the Cornish Rebellion to show that this was the case was not acceptable.

Question 2: 'The Church in England in 1547 was little different from what it had been in the late 1520s'. Assess the validity of this view.

This was the most popular of the essay questions and produced some excellent answers. There were some students who produced a narrative descriptive account of the Great Matter, but these were a minority. The vast majority of students wrote responses which examined the state of the Church in England in the late 1520s and compared it with what it had become in 1547. In doing so, they focused on the concept of change and continuity. More able students were able to explain that changes occurred as a result of the Ten Articles but that changes were reversed by the Act of Six Articles. Knowledge of the Dissolution was strong, although some were side-tracked into

discussion of the Pilgrimage of Grace, without making this relevant to the question. There were some very effective answers which distinguished between the impact on the clergy and the laity as well as analysing the extent of the powers of the King.

Some students considered the first year of Edward's reign, which was allowed for in the question, but this was not a requirement to reach the higher levels. Unfortunately, some students went beyond 1547 and wrote about the more significant changes enacted in Edward's reign. Many students wrote falsely about Henry's 'Protestantism' and suggested that the Church in England was Protestant as a result of the break with Rome. Cromwell was described as Protestant, as was Cranmer. Clearly, Cranmer is identified as Protestant in Edward's reign, but he fought against being identified as such in Henry's reign and Cromwell knew the penalties of being seen to be a sympathiser in the 1530s. It would have been much better, as many students appreciated, to have used the terminology, 'religious reformers' or 'evangelicals'.

Question 3: How far, in the years 1547 to 1569, did concerns over the succession threaten the stability of England?

This question was done less well than either 02 or 04. There were many narrative descriptive accounts which only made summative comments about the threat to stability. A significant number saw the question as focusing solely on the 'Mid-Tudor Crisis' and wrote a response in this vein. Such answers were chronologically limited; examining the reigns of Edward and Mary and ignoring Elizabeth altogether. Some students attempted to define what instability meant, which was useful. Those who were able to widen their definition, beyond the security of the monarch on the throne, were generally more analytical. There are clear examples of challenges to the monarch, many of which were not necessarily critical. The best students evaluated key events. These included events such as: Edward was kidnapped by Somerset and held hostage in Windsor Castle; the questioning of the plans which Henry had made for his son's succession, which caused a political crisis and resulted in Seymour's removal; the removal of Mary from the succession by Edward's unconstitutional Devyse, which resulted in a political crisis and the potential for military action; Mary being threatened by a rebel army at the gates of London due to fears about the succession and the loss of sovereignty anticipated by the Spanish marriage; Elizabeth causing a potential crisis by not naming her successor when she nearly died from smallpox; the crisis in the north when the Northern Earls tried to ensure that Mary Queen of Scots was included in the succession by taking up arms. However, too many students thought none of these issues to be serious.

Some spent time describing other threats to stability. This was credited only when some substantial consideration of succession issues was also included. Some made links between succession and religion and looked at how the succession threatened religious groups and led to instability. This was another legitimate approach. Some concluded that the real threat to stability was not issues about the succession but social and economic crises. Such responses usually contained a substantial consideration of the issue of the succession, but some were limited because they focused too heavily on the 1549 commotions and the problems experienced by Mary. Little credit was given to those few students who interpreted this question as a question about foreign policy.

Question 4: How effectively did Elizabeth deal with the threat from Spain in the years 1558 to 1569?

This was the least popular essay question, but it was generally done well. A significant number of students approached this question analytically and identified the nature of the threats faced by Elizabeth and her effectiveness in dealing with them, Equal credit was given to those who argued

that, on balance, Elizabeth dealt with the threats effectively and those who argued that she failed to do so provided the student made a supported case. There was very good knowledge demonstrated of Elizabeth's economic policies with regard to trade, relations with the Dutch Protestants, treaties signed by Elizabeth and the potential for marriage with Philip. The support given to, and the exclusion of, the Sea Beggars was also clearly explained. Francis Drake was considered in the context of his piracy and as the saviour of England in the face of the Armada. Less well explained, and in some cases not considered, was the domestic threat posed by support for Mary Queen of Scots.

Frequently this was the last question attempted and, as a result, some answers were not fully developed.. However, there were some responses which had a very narrow focus. Details of the Armada are increasingly well known and the majority of students were able to provide a useful analysis of this. However, some students produced narrative/descriptive Armada accounts, to the exclusion of all other aspects. This approach was awarded Level 2 when done well. A small number of students went beyond the terminal date of the question; such sections were marked as irrelevant.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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