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# AS LEVEL HISTORY

7041/1D Stuart Britain and the Crisis of Monarchy, 1603-1702  
Component 1D Absolutism challenged: Britain, 1603-1649  
Report on the Examination

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7041/1D  
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## General Comments

Some of the best answers to this year's paper showed an extremely sound understanding of the period covered by the questions. There were plenty of clearly focused responses to Question 01, which demanded the evaluation and comparison of two sources. Equally, many students wrote a well-constructed essay in Section B, developing an organised and balanced argument. When students performed less well, it was usually because of their failure to respond to exactly what was asked for in the questions, or because their knowledge was insufficient to enable them to support the points they made adequately. Students who had an appreciation of chronology and who covered the full date range indicated in the questions, as well as making convincing arguments, backed by appropriate evidence, were those who achieved the higher level in Section B. The majority of students managed their time well during the exam, although there was evidence that some students wrote too much on the extract question. More attempted question 2 as an essay from the first part of the course in comparison to question 3 which covered content at the very end of the course. Answers that focused on the wording of the question and confidently illustrated specific examples stood out from those that tended to take a more general approach to the essays.

## Question 1

The majority of students were clear about the assessment focus of the extract question. Almost all the students examined the extracts in turn before offering a comparison as to which was the most convincing but some did start with a summary of which one they considered most convincing. Some students did not focus on the wording of the question, the development of Arminianism, or failed to focus on the dates in the question for this, 1618 to 1629.

The best responses were able to address the three key elements needed for an answer to this question.

(i) An understanding of the interpretations in Extract A and Extract B.

The best students were able to look at the extracts holistically and explicitly identify the overall interpretation of each extract, in relation to the focus of the question, as the very first part of their response, before then considering the parts of the extract that led to this overall argument. In this way they clearly showed understanding of what the historian was arguing as a whole, before analysing any sub-arguments made within the extracts and using own knowledge to help support their comments and explain the context. In explaining the overall argument of each interpretation many students put this in their own words but some did paraphrase key words from each extract to help them shape what the interpretation being put forward was.

(ii) An understanding of the historical context

The more successful students provided appropriate contextual knowledge both to support the interpretation being considered. Only in the stronger responses did students tend also to challenge the interpretation in some way with supporting context. In general, more students struggled to provide context for Extract A than B as most students were more comfortable with knowledge of Charles' relationship with Arminianism. In some of the very best responses, however, there was some excellent deployment of contextual knowledge on James' relationship with Arminianism. For

example, students referenced his appointment of Lancelot Andrewes, his support for Richard Montagu or how Arminian ideas on divine right but also their political allegiance was used by James as part of his promotion of his idea of the Spanish Match. Some also referenced his 1618 Book of Sports or 1622 Declaration to Preachers. Others linked his religious policies in Scotland, notably the 1618 Articles of Perth, in the context of his support for Arminianism. Some also referenced his pointed appointment of Laud to be Bishop of St David's, as far geographically as possible to place Laud from London that James could achieve. Unfortunately, weaker responses tended to want to use of more general knowledge of James' religious policies from the start of this reign to try to make general points about his approach to religion. In some cases, this was made loosely valid when referenced as part of the Jacobethan balance or James' view of Catholicism as the 'mother church' but students should use the dates in the question to focus their use of context.

In a similar vein a number of students when addressing Charles' support for Arminianism used post-1629 context too much rather than the numerous examples from 1625 to 1629, for example, Appello Caesarum, Montagu as royal chaplain, the side-lining of Archbishop Abbot or the promotion of Laud to Bishop of London in 1628. Use of post-1629 material was useful when it was done in a focused way as part of assessing the argument in B that in the years 1618-29 concern at the development of Arminianism was exaggerated. There was some excellent use of Charles' approach to tonnage and poundage or his political use of the 1626 Forced Loan as part of assessing Extract B in terms of Charles' style of government and relationship with the Political Nation. Many referenced Wentworth as an example of a critic still willing to work in Charles' government.

(iii) Comparison between the two Extracts

The better responses drew on their analyses of each extract to provide a meaningful and well-supported judgement. Many argued, rightly, that both Extract A and B had convincing elements to them and provided appropriate evidence to support this. Most, however, focused on A as the more convincing argument and stressed that Charles I did break the Jacobethan balance and his imposition of Arminianism compared to James's approach was a turning point rather than the argument of extract B that the concern aroused by Arminianism was exaggerated. Criticism of the extracts for what they do not contain is not needed.

## Question 2

This was the more popular of the two essay question in terms of the number of student who chose to answer it. The majority of students were comfortable with a range of examples of James' extravagance, notably his use of the ante-supper and his favour to favourites. The strongest responses were able to balance James' extravagance as a factor with a range of other factors, including the debt left by Elizabeth I, his greater household expenses, the impact of inflation and the failures to reform the system. In explaining the problems with the system, the best responses were able to link it to the impact of inflation, the vested interest of the Political Nation and the attempt at reform through Cecil's Great Contract of 1610. Weaker responses tended to have a limited grasp of the role of Cecil or Cranfield and the key financial measures of the period such as Impositions, selling titles, Book of Rates, Book of Bounty or Monopolies.

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**Question 3**

There were a number of responses to this question and in most students were able to write well about Charles I as a cause of political division. These answers rooted Charles as an issue in his approach to kingship and for this period his unwillingness to negotiate and illustration that he could not be trusted. Stronger responses were able to balance this with other factors that caused division, namely the impact of the Levellers, the role of the Scots in post-1646 negotiations but predominantly the politicisation of the New Model and the growing division between the Army and moderates in Parliament. The best answers had a clear grasp of the post-1646 narrative of the breakdown of attempts at settlement and Charles' part in this through his attitude to The Heads of the Proposals, his Engagement with the Scots and thus his role in causing the Second Civil War. In explaining the division between the New Model and Parliament better responses were able to reference the Windsor Prayer Meeting, the Vote of No Addresses, the Newport Treaty, Ireton's Remonstrance and Pride's Purge. In general responses were able to address clearly division in the years 1640 to 1642, particularly the development of Constitutional Royalism in reaction to parliamentary radicalism exemplified by the 'King Pym' as potential demagogue making use of the 'London mob'. Many needed, however, to develop the links between the Irish Rebellion, Militia Bill and Grand Remonstrance as part of the division of Parliament into two sides to make civil war possible could have been more explicit to focus on the causes of civil war.

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

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