

A LEVEL

Examiners' report

HISTORY A

H505

For first teaching in 2015

Y316/01 Summer 2024 series

Contents

Introduction	3
Paper Y316/01 series overview	4
Section A overview	5
Question 1	5
Section B overview	12
Question 2*	12
Question 3*	20
Question 4*	20

Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. A selection of candidate answers is also provided. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

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Paper Y316/01 series overview

Y316 is one of twenty-one units for Paper 3 of the A Level examination for GCE History. This unit tests an extended period of History of at least one hundred years through an interpretation question on a named in-depth topic and through two essays.

The paper is divided into two sections. In Section A candidates are required to use contextual knowledge to test the views of two historians about one of the three named in-depth topics or an aspect of one. The question does not require them to comment on the style of writing or the provenance of the interpretation.

In Section B candidates are required to answer two essay questions from a choice of three.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> showed a clear understanding of the views of the two interpretations in relation to the question were able to use contextual knowledge to test the interpretations, linking that knowledge directly to the interpretations through evaluative words were able to consider both the strengths and the limitations of the interpretations using evaluative words covered the whole period in a balanced way in the essay questions adopted a thematic approach made links and comparisons between aspects of the topic supported their arguments with precise and relevant examples reached a supported judgement about the issue in the question. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> showed a limited understanding of one or both of the interpretations did not go beyond a basic explanation of part of the interpretation did not link any contextual knowledge directly to the interpretation adopted a chronological rather than a thematic approach in the essay questions did not make links or comparisons even if events from different parts of the period were discussed in the same paragraph did not cover the whole period did not focus on the precise wording of the question made unsupported comments about issues which were no more than assertions.

Section A overview

There is one compulsory question in this section. This question requires candidates to explain the view of each interpretation in relation to the question and then evaluate the interpretation by the application of contextual knowledge. Responses should show an understanding of the wider debate connected to the issue.

Section A in Paper Y316 is focused on the Liberal government's attitude to Home Rule 1908-12.

Question 1

- 1 Evaluate the interpretations in **both** of the two passages.

Explain which you think is more convincing as an explanation of the attitude of the Liberal government to Home Rule in the years from 1908 to 1912.

[30]

The interpretation question was on the whole answered well and the majority of candidates were able to access the higher levels by clearly using their own knowledge to evaluate the views in the two passages. Candidates recognised that Passage A argues that the Liberal Party were consistently and ideologically committed to Home Rule in Ireland while Passage B argues that the Liberal Party needed Irish support in Parliament to achieve their social reform agenda. More successful responses provided relevant examples to both support and challenge the arguments in the passages and often referred to key events such as the rising militarism in Ireland in this period and the crisis over the 1909 budget which led to two elections in 1910 and the passing of the Parliament Act in 1911 with its important implications for passing Home Rule through the House of Lords. The key differentiator is that in the more successful answers candidates clearly used their own knowledge to evaluate the views in the passages using language such as 'supported by' and 'challenged by'. Less successful responses were often confused about the events of 1908-12 and downloaded knowledge from Gladstone's attempts to pass Home Rule without linking it to the Liberal government in the period 1908-12. They also just explained the view in the passages and used phrases such as 'fails to mention', i.e. evaluating by omission rather than engaging with the arguments that the historians were making.

Exemplar 1 below shows a Level 6 response with a good understanding of the arguments in both passages in relation to the question and detailed own knowledge used effectively to evaluate the passages and reach a judgement.

Exemplar 1

1		<p>Passage A argues that Home Rule was an intrinsic conviction of the Liberal government - Liberal policy was "a the logical consequence of a long-standing commitment to Ireland." Passage B, in contrast, suggests that "the best policy was a gradualist approach" for the Liberals: they were not committed to Home Rule; instead, the IPP balance of power and personal influence of Redmond meant that Irish nationalists were directing Liberal policies. This essay will argue that Passage B offers the more realistic interpretation.</p> <p>Passage A claims that "Liberal policy... commitment to Ireland. This is unconvincing: Asquith did not share Gladstone's messianic fervour for Home Rule. He was lukewarm on the subject, which had lost its Gladstonian centrality. This construal of Asquith as reluctant is corroborated by the extremely mild terms of the bill in April 1912: the Irish administration had no power over taxation except the ability to add 10%; the Westminster parliament could amend or repeal any legislation passed by the Irish parliament. The watered-down version of Home Rule suggests the Liberals were not as keen as Passage A insinuates. Passage A's assertion that "Only an overwhelming belief... can explain... Home Rule Crisis" is also doubtful. The People's Budget Crisis of 1909 was the</p>
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real reason for the Liberals' pursuit of a Home Rule agenda. After ~~the~~ Asquith lost his overall majority in the December 1910 election, Redmond was the arbiter at Westminster with 74 seats: the Liberals were compelled to follow a Home Rule agenda in return for IPP backing so that they might secure a mandate. Nevertheless, the notion that ~~the~~ the Liberals must have been intent on securing Home Rule otherwise it would not have endured "the storms and stresses" is compelling. Ulster militancy increased as the crisis suppurated from 1912 to 1914. For example, the UVF (est 1913) had attracted over 100,000 to enroll by December 1913; it was organised into platoons and

battalions with a county regimental structure. Such keynotes of organisation were replicated during the ~~the~~ complex drafting process of the Ulster Covenant, involving a special commission. That c. 450,000 signed in September 1912, often in blood, signalled the vehemence of Ulster Unionism, ~~an~~ ~~even~~ signal reinforced by the importing of 25,000 guns at the Larne gunrunning in April ~~1914~~ 1914. Therefore, the Liberals' determination and resolve does counter the idea that they did not care at all about the IPP's clamours for Home Rule. ⁴¹

Passage B argues that "the Liberals' main priority "was social reform and how to deal with an obstructionist House of Lords." This interpretation of the Liberals' priorities is convincing: their tenacious endeavours to force through the budget, first appealing to King George V, who said he was willing to stack the Lords if the Liberals gained another majority and the budget proved intractable, second holding a second general election in 1910, show how ~~resolved they~~ ~~or~~ committed they were to Lloyd-George's People's Budget. Further, the Parliament Act of 1911, which reduced the Lords' veto to a delaying power, highlights their determination to erode to obstructionist House of Lords ⁴². The idea that

the fervour of nationalists had been increased by the Parliament Act of 1911 is also a perceptive one. The Parliament Act - which Bonar Law styled the "Home-Rule-in-disguise act" - made Home Rule a viable prospect by removing the impediment of the House of Lords; the Unionists could no longer rely on the Lords as a buffer. As the ~~the~~ potential ^{for} of Home Rule increased, Irish nationalists became increasingly ardent. Further, Passage B suggests that Redmond "had personal influence ~~of~~ with the Liberal government". This interpretation is supported by the Tories' endorsement of the Unionists' extra-parliamentary and unconstitutional tactics due to their belief that the Liberals had been hijacked into a corrupt bargain with Redmond: the call for Home Rule was an insincere bluff. Evidently, there was a close personal relationship between Redmond and the Liberals, which drove the Conservatives to such extreme measures of opposition.

Passage B offers a far more convincing ~~* interpretation~~ interpretation of the attitude of the Liberal government to Home Rule between 1908 and 1912. Firstly, Passage B more accurately construes the Liberals' reliance on Redmond following the general election of December 1910: it is not the case, as Passage A claims, that "the Liberal government was not reliant on Irish votes." given Redmond won 74 seats and Asquith had lost

		<p>his overall majority. Secondly, Passage B more convincingly represents the Liberal attitude towards Home Rule more convincingly. Passage A's assertion that "Liberal leaders the Liberal government felt "it must attempt to secure Home Rule for Ireland" overlooks the fact that, during negotiations over partition, the Liberals were not committed to 32-county Home Rule; when the Lords amended the bill in May 1914 to exclude the whole of Ulster indefinitely and an Ulster Provisional Government was set up, Redmond was faced with Liberal backtracking. Passage A lacks nuance, overstating the Liberals' whole-hearted, overwhelming support for Home Rule, and misapplying Gladstone's messianic fervour to Asquith. Passage A also overstates the Liberals' "long-standing commitment to Ireland". Passage B's argument that the Liberals cared far less for Home Rule is more plausible given the limited terms of the Third Home Rule Bill and Asquith's lukewarm attitude. Asquith's "Micawberism" throughout 1912-14 - he did not attempt to engage in compromise regarding partition, and allowed the crisis to escalate to minatory proportions - supports the idea that his overtures to the Irish nationalists in the election campaign "was nothing more than a tactic used to maximise the support of the Irish in England." However, Passage A's claim that the Liberals' persistence throughout the protracted</p>
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process reflects the strength of their convictions has some merit. For example, in March 1914, the ~~general~~ Cabinet's attempts to forestall UVF endeavours to occupy arms depots in Ulster – a precautionary and defensive measure, despite the ensuing fiasco due to miscommunication from Paget – indicate that they did want to preclude Ulster militancy: though they were not prepared to enforce Home Rule on Ulster, they did attempt to protect the rest of Ireland. Therefore, Passage B is the more convincing in explaining the Liberals' reliance on the IPP following ^{the} December 1910 general election, and in explaining the Liberals' attitude towards Home Rule. However, it perhaps fails to capture the idea that Passage A arguably overstates: that the Liberals were determined that Home Rule be enacted.

Assessment for learning



Candidates should take an overview of the two passages. What is the main view of each passage about the issue in the question?

Section B overview

Candidates are required to answer two questions from a choice of three. To do well on Section B candidates need to make connections and links across the whole period of their study. They should explain similarities and differences between the events they are discussing to show an awareness of continuity and change across the whole period, unless instructed otherwise. The comparisons may be made across the period within the topic or between regions, depending on the topic. It is also important that the comparisons are explained – what is similar or different between the periods or regions.

The most successful responses will test a hypothesis and reach a supported judgement.

Question 2*

2* 'Opponents of the Union achieved their goals only when they used constitutional nationalism.'

How far do you agree with this view of the period from 1791 to 1921?

[25]

This was the most popular of the essay questions and was generally well understood. More successful responses established themes such as constitutional movements, attempts at rebellion and influence on parliamentary legislation, although it was also effective to look at themes such as whether they achieved their main goals and won mass support or to focus on constitutional, revolutionary and cultural nationalism across the period. Some very impressive essays came to the conclusion that it was only when constitutional and revolutionary nationalists worked together that they made real progress. Less successful essays either adopted a chronological approach which often stopped by the end of the 1880s or focused only on constitutional methods as they had not recognised that the question was comparative.

Exemplar 2 below is a Level 5 response which is focused and has a thematic approach but its synthesis is not developed enough for Level 6.

Assessment for learning



Remind candidates to provide evidence to support any comparisons or contrasts made, otherwise their argument becomes assertion and is unlikely to reach the higher levels.

Exemplar 2

2)	<p>opponents of the union achieved their goals only when they used constitutional nationalism.</p> <p>The main goal of the opponents of the Act of Union (1800) was to repeal it and achieve self-government for Ireland. While constitutional nationalist parties such as the Irish Parliamentary Party under Charles Stewart Parnell and John Redmond made significant progress in convincing the British government to support their Home Rule measures, it was in fact the work of Sinn Féin and the revolutionary IRA that managed to achieve an Irish free state. Therefore, it cannot be said that opponents of the union achieved their goals only when they used constitutional nationalism. However, the goal of producing positive legislation for Ireland was achieved more significantly through the constitutional work of Charles Stewart Parnell and Daniel O'Connell, but it was the combination of constitutional and revolutionary nationalist groups that allowed opponents of the union to make an impact on the British government and leave an historic nationalist legacy.</p> <p>The most important goal of opponents of the Union was self-government for Ireland, and in the revolutionary sense, Republican</p>
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separatism. This goal was effectively achieved in 1921 by the Dail, the ~~democratic~~ ^{political} wing of the IRA. Although they did not achieve a 32 county republic, they did achieve a 26 county free state, the most significant and successful achievement of any constitutional and revolutionary nationalist groups. They achieved this goal through the combined political and military pressure of the movement. Michael Collins proved successful and impactful when in combat with British soldiers, unfamiliar with the Irish countryside, targeted assassinations of the flying columns being one of Collins' most successful tactics. The combination of this military pressure with the Dail, a self-proclaimed parliament headed by Eamon de Valera, ~~continued to form an organised body~~, was enough to force the British government to granting them concessions. While Collins spoke of the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921 as "Not the freedom we had all dreamt of and fought for," it was ~~the~~ arguably the greatest achievement of opponents of the union and was not brought about by constitutional means. ~~was~~ constitutional nationalism did make a lot of progress towards their goal of achieving self-government. The balance of power held by the IPP in 1885

following their success in the general election, winning 86 seats overall, provided the cementation of the Liberal Prime Minister, Gladstone to Home Rule. This led to the first Home Rule Bill (1886), although this was voted down in the House of Commons, it did set a significant precedent. The growth of the IPP following its reunification by constitutional nationalist leader John Redmond in 1900, following Russell's death, pushed the new Liberal Prime Minister Henry Asquith to express his support for Home Rule. The 1910 election gave the IPP the balance of power at Westminster and pushed the Liberal government further to Home Rule. The constitutional work of John Redmond, in his alliance with the Liberal party, materialised in Home Rule actually getting onto the statute book in 1914, however, with the expectation that there would be partition with Ulster. This goes against the goal of opponents of the Union, to ~~for~~ have a united, free nation. The partition of 6 counties in Ulster means that Ireland would not be unified. Furthermore, due to the outbreak of the first world war, a ⁽¹⁹¹⁴⁾ Suspensory Act was placed on this Home Rule bill and the IPP lost support mainly in the 1918 election, Sinn Féin winning 73

seats. This illustrates how although constitutional nationalists made significant progress in achieving their goal, it was the spark of revolutionary nationalism at the end of the period that enabled self-government for Ireland.

In terms of achieving positive legislation and reform for Ireland, another goal for opponents of the union, Constitutional Nationalism was the more successful. The work of Daniel O'Connell in the 1830s proved his skill as a constitutional nationalist leader. The achievement of Catholic Emancipation in 1829, following O'Connell's constitutional success at the Croke Park election (1828) was a significant turning point in the reform of the union. The campaigning of O'Connell and the Catholic Association (established in 1823) grew the support for nationalism in Ireland, especially through the implementation of the 'penny a month scheme' (1824) which used the Catholic priests as a recruiting mechanism, both gaining support of the Catholic church and appealing to a wider proportion of the population who would then pay a ~~subscription~~ to their local priest and become part of the movement. The success of O'Connell's constitutional

movement can be seen in the further reform
 he extracted from the British government,
 for example the 1838 Tithe Act which
 stopped the procedure of paying 10% of
 your income to the church of Ireland, of
 which most people were not a part, and
 instead you could pay this to your landlord.
 However, this did produce problems in terms
 of landlord-tenant relationships that
 were already unstable. Additionally the
 1840 Municipal Corporations Act led to
 the purging of middle-class Catholics,
 10 councils run by O'Connellite candidates,
 O'Connell himself becoming Lord Mayor of
 Dublin in 1841. These reforms illustrate
 the success of constitutional nationalism
 in improving conditions in Ireland, in
 the area for social and political
 equality. Furthermore, the work of Parnell
 in the 1870s-80s paved the further success of
 constitutional nationalism in extracting
 political legislation for Ireland. Parnell's
 work as president of the Land League
 (1879) and his ability to use tenantry rhetoric
 to pressure the government with the
 implicit threat of violence pushed
 Gladstone to focus on land reform, the
 1881 Land Act meeting some of the aims of
 the Land League by addressing the 3 F's,

fair rent, free sale and fixing of tenure. The focus on land grew with effective tenant purchase schemes such as the Ashbourne Act (1885) and the Wyndham Land Act (1903) illustrating the success of constitutional nationalism in reforming the union and encouraging reforms from Ireland.

In regards to the goal of making an impact on the British government, although constitutional nationalism had the most significant support base, ^{O'Connell's} ~~Parliamentary~~ ^{Parliamentary} meetings attracting 3-4 million viewers, it was the revolutionary movements that were more successful in shifting public opinion away from the British government and in support for the nationalist movement. The 1916 Easter Rising and the aftermath was a significant turning point in regards to the impact and attitude towards the British government. The ~~execution~~ ^{execution} circumstances of the rising, Britain's defeat in war with Germany, made the rising a more significant threat than it perhaps would have been. The execution of the 12 rebel leaders and the murder of pacifist Finian's (Sheehy - Skeffington) by Captain Bowen-Colthurke caused outrage in Ireland, leading to the election of

Question 3*

3* 'The Catholic Emancipation Act (1829) did more to preserve the Union than any other reform.'

How far do you agree with this view of the period from 1791 to 1921?

[25]

This question elicited responses across the whole mark range with a surprising number not including the attempts to pass Home Rule through the Westminster parliament in their answers, perhaps because they were confused about whether it would have preserved the Union. More successful responses established themes such as political, religious and economic reform and then made comparisons across the period often including the Act of Union, Gladstone's reforms and the 1911 Parliament Act as comparisons to the Catholic Emancipation Act. There were a few exceptional answers which managed to effectively refer to electoral reform and local government changes in wide-ranging essays. Less successful responses showed a limited coverage of the period and often a tendency to over-focus on Catholic Emancipation and the role of Daniel O'Connell at the expense of a more balanced coverage, perhaps because of the depth study focused on him.

Question 4*

4* 'Regional differences were the main economic influence on Irish nationalism in the period from 1791 to 1921.'

How far do you agree?

[25]

This was the least popular of the essay questions and there were some impressive answers which showed a good range of knowledge over the whole period. More successful responses compared regional differences to other economic influences such as the famine and land and closely linked their evidence to the influence on Irish nationalism. Some top level responses made links to support for Irish nationalism in America and to the impact of Northern industrial success on the Ulster issue in the early twentieth century. In less successful responses candidates sometimes seemed confused about what the regional differences were and often bunched their evidence in the period from 1845 to the 1880s which led to a very unbalanced coverage of the period.

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