



EDX.WN9 The Sturmabteilung and Nazi Party Organisation, 1921-1923

EDEXCEL 1HI0 · Calculators not allowed · about 65 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Answer ALL questions. Write in full sentences for Questions 14 and 18. You are advised to spend about 65 minutes on this pack.

- 1** Give the year in which the Sturmabteilung, later known as the SA, was formed under Ernst Rohm.

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

- 2** Name the leader who helped organise the SA from 1921 and recruited many ex-soldiers.

(Total for Question 2 is 1 mark)

- 3** Give two social groups from which early SA recruits were often drawn.

(Total for Question 3 is 2 marks)

- 4** State one visible feature of the SA's uniform that distinguished its members at rallies and meetings.

(Total for Question 4 is 1 mark)

- 5** Name the German city where the Nazi Party and its SA were particularly active and where Hitler staged rallies up to 1923.

(Total for Question 5 is 1 mark)

6 State two functions the SA performed at Nazi meetings between 1921 and 1923.

(Total for Question 6 is 2 marks)

7 Give one form of training or activity SA members undertook to present a paramilitary appearance.

(Total for Question 7 is 1 mark)

8 Name one factor that made ex-soldiers join the SA in the early 1920s.

(Total for Question 8 is 1 mark)

9 State one reason the Nazi Party valued the SA when organising public events up to 1923.

(Total for Question 9 is 2 marks)

10 Name one early symbol or item, other than the brown shirt, used by SA units to create a uniform appearance.

(Total for Question 10 is 1 mark)

11 State two personal motives that might have led a former Freikorps member to join the SA in the early 1920s.

(Total for Question 11 is 2 marks)

- 12** Give one organisation, other than the SA, that provided paramilitary-style fighters in Germany after the First World War.

(Total for Question 12 is 1 mark)

- 13** Give two things you can infer from Source A about the SA's behaviour at a 1922 Nazi meeting.

Source A: From a report in a local Bavarian municipal police bulletin, October 1922. The writer, the town police inspector, describes arriving at a hall where a political meeting was due to begin. He recorded a group of about thirty men in matching brown shirts standing in the entranceway; they pushed through crowds to sit close to the platform and their captain barked short orders as the meeting began. The inspector added that when a rival speaker tried to enter later, the brown-shirted men rose and physically blocked him until the police moved him away.

(Total for Question 13 is 4 marks)

14 Explain why the SA recruited many ex-soldiers and Freikorps men between 1921 and 1923.

You may use the following in your answer:

- economic and social problems faced by ex-servicemen after the First World War
- the appeal of military-style organisation and belonging offered by the SA

You must also use information of your own.

(Total for Question 14 is 12 marks)

15 How useful are Sources B and C for an enquiry into the role of the SA in intimidating political opponents between 1921 and 1923?

Source B: From a memoir written in 1935 by a local Social Democratic activist who survived an attack in 1923. He remembers that a band of 'brown-shirted men' surrounded the meeting, shouted over the speakers and finally seized the platform while the organisers were shoved aside. He wrote that the attackers did not wear officers' insignia and seemed to be young, untrained men.

Source C: From a short report in a national conservative newspaper, June 1922, summarising scenes at a recent Nazi rally. The report notes that SA stewards formed a disciplined cordon around the speakers and escorted them through hostile crowds. The paper praised the SA for restoring order, and suggested that left-wing agitators had been responsible for earlier disturbances.

(Total for Question 15 is 8 marks)

- 16** Study Interpretations 1 and 2. They give different views about the importance of the SA to the Nazi Party's growth up to 1923. What is the main difference between these views?

Interpretation 1: From K. Bauer, *The Early Stormtroopers and German Politics*, 1998. Bauer argues that the SA were a central instrument of the Nazi movement right from 1921. He emphasises how the brown shirts gave the party a visible, organised presence in towns and how their capacity to intimidate opponents allowed the Party to control meeting places and public space, creating the conditions for rapid growth.

Interpretation 2: From L. Mendel, *Militias of the Weimar Years*, 2005. Mendel suggests the SA were one of several paramilitary groups in the early twenties and argues they played a more limited, local role before 1923. She stresses that many SA units were poorly trained and that the Party's political ideas and Hitler's speeches were the main drivers of support rather than paramilitary action.

(Total for Question 16 is 4 marks)

- 17** Suggest one reason why Interpretations 1 and 2 give different views about the SA's importance to the Nazi Party up to 1923.

(Total for Question 17 is 4 marks)

- 18** How far do you agree with Interpretation 1 about the SA being a central instrument in the Nazi Party's growth up to 1923? Explain your answer. You should use Interpretation 1, Interpretation 2 and your own knowledge. 4 marks are available for spelling, punctuation, grammar and the use of specialist terminology.

(Total for Question 18 is 20 marks)

Mark scheme · EDX.WN9 The Sturmabteilung and Nazi Party Organisation, 1921-1923

Question 1

- **B1** 1921
- **Answer:** 1921

Question 2

- **B1** Ernst Rohm
- **Answer:** Ernst Rohm

Question 3

- **B1** ex-soldiers
- **B1** Freikorps members
- **Answer:** Ex-soldiers and Freikorps members.

Question 4

- **B1** the brown shirt
- **Answer:** Their brown shirts.

Question 5

- **B1** Munich
- **Answer:** Munich

Question 6

- **B1** provided security at Nazi rallies
- **B1** intimidated or broke up opponents' meetings
- **Answer:** They provided security at Nazi rallies and intimidated or broke up opponents' meetings.

Question 7

- **B1** drilling/parading in formation
- **Answer:** Drilling and parading in formation.

Question 8

- **B1** unemployment after demobilisation
- **Answer:** Unemployment after demobilisation.

Question 9

- **B1** to attract and impress crowds with an organised, intimidating presence
- **B1** to protect speakers and meetings from disruption by political opponents
- **Answer:** To attract and impress crowds with an organised presence, and to protect speakers and meetings from disruption.

Question 10

- **B1** a party armband or brown-coloured headgear/peaked cap
- **Answer:** A party armband or brown-coloured cap.

Question 11

- **B1** desire for camaraderie and a familiar military-style group
- **B1** a wish for pay or small rewards and social status after demobilisation
- **Answer:** A desire for camaraderie in a military-style group, and the hope of pay, rewards or social status.

Question 12

- **B1** Freikorps
- **Answer:** The Freikorps

Question 13

- **B1** inference 1, e.g. the SA acted as an organised group to control seating and the platform area
- **B1** supporting detail from the source for inference 1, e.g. 'about thirty men in matching brown shirts' and 'their captain barked short orders'
- **B1** inference 2, e.g. the SA physically prevented opponents from speaking or entering, using intimidation
- **B1** supporting detail from the source for inference 2, e.g. 'they rose and physically blocked him until the police moved him away'

Question 14

- **Level 1** (1-3): Identifies one or two simple reasons why ex-soldiers and Freikorps men joined the SA, with little or no supporting detail or explanation.
- **Level 2** (4-6): Identifies and begins to explain some reasons, supported by accurate detail, but explanation is limited.
- **Level 3** (7-9): Explains several reasons clearly, supported by accurate and relevant detail showing links between causes and recruitment.
- **Level 4** (10-12): Explains multiple reasons in a well-developed and analytical way, supported throughout by precise and accurate detail and showing how the reasons connect to produce recruitment to the SA.
- **Indicative content:**
 - Economic hardship and unemployment after demobilisation made ex-soldiers seek paid or semi-paid roles; paramilitary groups could offer money, food or a sense of purpose.
 - Many former Freikorps members already had experience of street fighting and a culture of political violence, so joining the SA provided continuity and an outlet for those skills.
 - The SA's military-style structure, ranks and drilling appealed to men used to army life, offering discipline, camaraderie and status which civilian life no longer provided.
 - Nationalist and anti-communist ideology attracted ex-servicemen who feared Bolshevism and wanted to defend what they saw as German order, aligning with the SA's role in breaking up left-wing meetings.
 - Leadership and recruitment networks linked the SA to local Freikorps commanders and ex-officers, and figures such as Ernst Rohm used personal contacts to bring whole groups across into the SA.
 - The social prestige of being part of a visible uniformed force at public rallies, combined with opportunities for violence and action, made SA membership attractive to those seeking masculine identity after the war.

Question 15

- **Level 1** (1-2): Offers a simple judgement about usefulness, with little supporting analysis of content or provenance.
- **Level 2** (3-5): Shows some evaluation of the sources, considering content and provenance, but assessment is not fully developed or lacks contextual support.
- **Level 3** (6-8): Offers a balanced and well-supported judgement on usefulness, analysing content, provenance and context, and showing how each source could be used or its limitations.
- **Indicative content:**
 - Source B is useful for eyewitness detail about intimidation and violence, giving a personal description of brown-shirted men seizing a platform; however its memoir form, written in 1935, may be affected by memory and later political context.
 - The claim in Source B that attackers were young and untrained could suggest that some SA groups were loosely organised, but this conflicts with other evidence of disciplined cordons, so the source should be compared with contemporaneous reports.
 - Source C is useful for showing how conservative newspapers portrayed the SA as restoring order, and for revealing contemporary public opinion among some groups, but its political sympathy with the right makes it a limited or biased witness on whether the SA were aggressors or protectors.
 - Provenance matters: Source B is retrospective and partisan, Source C is contemporary but politically partial. Together they allow a historian to cross-check descriptions of SA activity and to assess differing public perceptions, but neither alone gives an objective account.

Question 16

- **Level 1** (1-2): Identifies a basic difference between the interpretations, with limited support from the texts.
- **Level 2** (3-4): Clearly identifies the main difference and supports this with direct reference to the ways each interpretation explains the SA's importance.
- **Indicative content:**
 - Interpretation 1 stresses the SA as central and decisive in giving the Nazi Party a public, intimidating presence that enabled growth, while Interpretation 2 downplays the SA's importance, seeing them as one of several paramilitary groups and arguing that political propaganda and Hitler's leadership were the main drivers of support.
 - A clear answer will quote or paraphrase the contrasting emphases: central instrument and control of public space in Interpretation 1, versus limited, local and poorly trained units with ideas and speeches as the key factor in Interpretation 2.

Question 17

- **Level 1** (1-2): Offers a simple, plausible reason why the interpretations differ, with little explanation.
- **Level 2** (3-4): Offers a clear reason and explains how this could lead to the different emphases, such as use of different sources or differing focus on political versus social factors.
- **Indicative content:**
 - They may use different sources, for example Bauer relying on local police and party records showing street intimidation, while Mendel uses memoirs and organisational reports that stress weakness and local variation.
 - They may adopt different priorities: one historian emphasises political action and control of public space, the other emphasises ideological appeal and leadership, producing contrasting conclusions about causation.

Question 18

- **Level 1** (1-4): Uses limited relevant knowledge and offers a simple, unsupported judgement about Interpretation 1.
- **Level 2** (5-8): Uses some relevant knowledge and considers both interpretations, but the argument is only partially developed and the judgement is not fully supported.
- **Level 3** (9-12): Uses a range of relevant knowledge, analyses the interpretations and reaches a supported judgement on how far the view in Interpretation 1 is convincing.
- **Level 4** (13-16): Uses precise, well-selected knowledge, evaluates both interpretations in detail and reaches a sustained, analytical judgement on the extent to which Interpretation 1 is convincing, with clear links between evidence and conclusion.
- **Indicative content:**
 - Support for Interpretation 1: the SA provided visible uniformed presence and often used intimidation to control meeting spaces, as witnesses and contemporary reports describe brown shirts seizing platforms and blocking opponents, which would have helped the Party to grow by dominating public political space.
 - Support for Interpretation 1: in towns like Munich the SA's capacity to organise rallies with a disciplined appearance made the Party appear strong and capable, attracting supporters who preferred order and decisive action in unstable times.
 - Challenges from Interpretation 2 and other evidence: many SA units varied in quality and discipline, and some contemporary accounts stress young, poorly trained members, suggesting the SA's effectiveness was inconsistent and sometimes limited before 1923.
 - Challenges: political ideas, propaganda and Hitler's oratory also attracted support; the Party's growth cannot be reduced to paramilitary activity alone, and in some areas other organisations competed for the same membership.
 - Balanced judgement: a strong answer will weigh the interpretations, argue that the SA was an important factor in many places and for many recruits because of visible intimidation and order, but that its role was not uniform and must be balanced against ideological appeal and local conditions as emphasised in Interpretation 2.
 - Use of own knowledge might include examples such as reported disruptions of left-wing meetings, the role of SA stewards at Nazi rallies, local variations in SA organisation, and the broader context of postwar paramilitary culture in Bavaria and other regions.