

The History of Svalbard: How to succeed at exam

- **Get your facts right**
You can get a long way by good reasoning, but you always need to know basic, relevant facts. Grave factual mistakes will be punished (and you will draw false conclusions).
- **Be precise**
Approximations and “loose talk” will be punished. Most censors assume that unclear writing means unclear thinking.
- **Be structured**
An orderly, well structured text will always be appreciated.
- **Be critical**
Don’t take arguments, data or information at face value. Be critical: ask questions and try to answer them through careful discussion and analysis.
- **Be objective – or at least try hard to be**
A reader (or censor) will rarely be interested in your personal opinions unless you are able to argue convincingly. Be fair and include relevant evidence, even if it contradicts your own findings.
- **Don’t try to be smart or funny**
Don’t assume that the reader (or censor) has a sense of humour or appreciates irony. Be serious about your writing.
- **Read the text carefully**
 - Which are the questions you are supposed to answer?
 - Do you know the facts you need?
- **Make an outline structure**
 - Introduction: interpret and define the problem(s), delineate.
 - Main part: tell the story, bring in all relevant facts that illuminate the problem.
 - Discussion: relate the story to the central questions, discuss critically.
 - Conclude (if possible) – without being opinionated.

It is a good idea to look through previous exams and solution examples on the SH-201 website. Note that the solution examples are just that – examples, not complete answers. You will normally want to write more extensively in the essay part.

Good luck!