



General Certificate of Education

A2 Archaeology 6011

**ACH4 Settlement and Social
Organisation**

Mark Scheme

2008 examination – June series

Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation meeting ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for the standardisation meeting each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed at the meeting and legislated for. If, after this meeting, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been discussed at the meeting they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

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ACH4

Settlement and Social Organisation

Study **Figures 1 to 3** on this and the following page.
Answer **both** parts of the question that follows.

Section A

Quality of Written Communication

The assessment of the Quality of Written Communication (QWC) in Section A is judged through the assessment of the clarity and appropriateness of the archaeological material presented. There are no discrete marks for the assessment of QWC but where questions are "levels" marked, QWC will influence the mark awarded within a particular level.

As a rough guide, QWC performance is characterised by the following descriptors.

- Level 1** Language is basic, descriptions and explanations are over-simplified and lack clarity.
- Level 2** Generally accurate use of language; descriptions and explanations can be easily followed, but are not clearly expressed throughout.
- Level 3** Accurate and appropriate use of language; descriptions and explanations are expressed with clarity throughout.

Further guidance on the assessment of QWC will be given at the Standardising Meeting.

Question 1

- (a) What sources are available to archaeologists investigating social differences based on gender and age in the past? You should refer to at least **one** of the **Figures 1 to 3** and use your own knowledge in your answer. (12 marks)

Target: AO1 (4) AO2 (8)

- L1: **Fragmentary or fleetingly relevant responses.**
Descriptive responses based on the examples given or from memory which contain some relevant content. Undeveloped lists. **1-2**
- L2: **Responses containing some relevant points but which are muddled, limited or poorly focused.**
Able to identify and explain some sources which might be useful and/or one or two examples and attempt to address the question. This may not be coherent. Alternately, superficial understanding of examples in the sources book. **3-5**

- L3: **Partially successful responses: Well-focused but limited range or presenting a good range of relevant detail but unfocused or unbalanced.**
May develop several examples of sources effectively – starting to relate them to social differentiation. Alternately, taking 1–2 site examples and discussing age and gender in depth. May show an awareness of limitations. **6-9**
- L4: **Good responses: Largely balanced and focused.**
Outlines a range of different types of sources and methods drawing on both the booklet and additional named sites from their own knowledge. Differentiation between L3 and L4 will largely be on the depth and range of understanding, awareness of limitations and quality of argument. Must address age as well as gender. **10-12**

Indicative Content

Lower end responses will be similar to those encountered at ACH2 (e.g. how to age and sex skeletons). This is fine for these levels since the paper does test synoptic understanding. However, a focus on sources which might provide evidence of social differentiation is required for Levels 3 and 4. Grave goods are likely to be the major source cited and good discussions of these provided they are linked to specific examples can reach Level 4. However, some discussion of other possible sources should be expected to move up within Level 4. These might include analysis of space on sites, skeletal remains, artefacts size, images and figurines. Assessment of relative value should not be rewarded as it forms the major element of Question 1(b).

- (b) How far is it possible to differentiate between achieved and ascribed status using physical evidence from the past? You should refer to at least **one of Figures 1 to 3** and use your own knowledge in your answer. **(13 marks)**

Target: AO1 (5) AO2 (8)

- L1: **Fragmentary or fleetingly relevant responses.**
Unsupported assertions or descriptive material (including points gleaned from figures). **1-2**
- L2: **Responses containing some relevant points but which are muddled, limited or poorly focused.**
Understands the terms but unable to clearly illustrate them. Alternately, good responses which address the question directly but provide no specific examples. Alternately, limited responses which may be based purely on the examples in the booklet. **3-6**
- L3: **Partially successful responses: Well focused but limited range or presenting a good range of relevant detail but unfocused or unbalanced.**
Direct, argued responses which provide some supporting evidence from several specific sites. Alternately, developed case studies which go beyond the examples given with a commentary which identifies the differences. Their approval should be critical. **7-10**
- L4: **Good responses: Largely balanced and focused.**
More sophisticated responses which address ‘how far’ directly and are able to clearly illustrate the differences between the concepts. Examples will draw on both booklet sources and their own knowledge. Should move beyond burial assemblages for 13. Responses should be clearly argued. **11-13**

Indicative Content

The focus should be on identifying the nature of status. Lower level responses are likely to discuss how status might be identified and may not display an understanding of the two key concepts themselves. Credit examples of useful indicators which **could** have been used to argue in relation to the question within the band even where the candidate has not taken that opportunity. Responses that understand the differences between ascribed and achieved status and can provide archaeological examples are unlikely to be below Level 3. Differentiate within and between Levels 3 and 4 according to range of indicators considered, quality of argument, relevance of examples and understanding of the limitations of evidence. For example indicators of status which might not survive in the archaeological record. A particular relevant ethnographic example might be O'Shea's work on the Omaha. Achieved/ascribed discussions may rest entirely on burial evidence, in particular the association of high status objects with skeletal remains in relation to age or gender or particular craft related assemblages. Broader responses may consider locations of burials in relation to others and to other features. Potential areas for response might include high status burials of young people as evidence of ascription or instances where children are buried with artefacts they were clearly too young to use. Wider responses might consider ascription based on categories other than age such as gender or ethnicity. Burials with weapons during the Anglo-Saxon period might feature prominently here. Conversely, achieved status is likely to rest heavily on higher status burials of older people (although this could also be due to ascription) or where there is association with change. The Amesbury Archer may figure in this respect.

Section B: Marking Thematic Essays at A2

The thematic approaches in ACH4 and ACH5 enable candidates to answer from many different contexts. These will in turn impose their own strictures and bias in favour of one form of evidence over another. It will be appreciated by centres that the examiners cannot supply rigid mark schemes which could only deal with a specific context. The mark scheme must be as flexible as the specification and sufficiently broad and catholic in its nature as to be capable of embracing whatsoever culture and time period teachers and candidates elect to study in that particular year. It will be clear then that older and more particularist forms of mark scheme are entirely inappropriate for our needs. Marking guidance therefore falls into two main types. A broad hierarchy of levels based on the assessment objectives for all essays and exemplification for each particular question. In the latter case the contexts and types of evidence suggested are simply for the sake of illustration. There are many other sets of evidence which would provide equally good answers.

Good examining is, ultimately, about the consistent application of judgement. Levels of response mark schemes provide the necessary framework for exercising that judgement but cannot cover all eventualities. Where you are very unsure about a particular response, refer it to the Principal Examiner.

Generic Essay Mark Scheme

Level 1 1-5 marks: AO1 (1-5) AO2 (0)

Weak or undeveloped answer

Either: Responses at the bottom of this level (1-2 marks) may provide **some information** which could be relevant to the question but it will be undifferentiated from irrelevant or inaccurate material – in other words it will be randomly rather than purposely linked to the question. More typically the candidate will demonstrate some understanding of the thrust of the question but is unable to respond in an adequate manner. Some understanding may be shown by the selection of relevant material although this will be presented in a ‘scattergun manner’ with **little discrimination**, explanation or attempt to use it as part of a logical argument. The account will be superficial and may be within the context of a purely narrative or descriptive framework.

Or: Alternately the response may consist of a **series of assertions**, some of which may be relevant to the question but which are unsupported. Nevertheless, some of these could have developed into higher level responses. Also include at this level responses which do address the question but are only a few sentences in length or undeveloped lists or plans which had the potential to become higher level answers.

Level 2 6-8 marks: AO1 (5-7) AO2 (1-2)

Limited response with some merit

Either: Responses which demonstrate understanding by including **some material relevant to the question**. However, it is likely that the candidate has been unable to organise their work successfully in order to meet the demands of the question. Typically this may include elements of a case study or the naming of 2-3 sites which

are mentioned in less detail. Understanding of the issues in the question will be **simplistic** and there will be very little assessment of the data which will often be presented in a descriptive format.

Or: Answers which do address the question and demonstrate some understanding of the issues, perhaps making several valid points. However, there will be very few or no relevant archaeological examples to support their case. The weakest responses at this level may refer to regions and periods rather than sites.

Also include at this level, developed and detailed essay plans which could have become higher level essays and good response a under a side.

Level 3 9-13 marks: AO1 (9-11) AO2 (1-2)

Reasonable response

Either: Responses which largely contain **material relevant to this question** and where the candidate has begun to organise and structure their work successfully in order to meet its demands. This may be of similar depth to Level 2 responses but will be largely focused on issues raised by the question. Introductions and conclusions are likely to be limited at this level and **appraisal will be fairly simple**.

Or: Answers which **address the question** and demonstrate a reasonable understanding of many of the issues it raises. They will be able to reach sensible conclusions but provide **very brief archaeological examples** to support their case. These will typically take the form of name checks of a number of sites and/or methods but these will not be developed. Include at this level, responses which are of Level 4 or 5 quality but which have only addressed half of a question which contains two main elements.

Level 4 14-17 marks: AO1 (12-14) AO2 (2-3)

Sound response

Either: Responses largely containing **well-focused, relevant material** organised in the form of 1-2 detailed case studies or a range of 4-6 shorter examples with some relevant development. The response must reach **some conclusions** – perhaps in the final paragraph. Depth of understanding of terms and case studies may be very good but commentary and argument will be underdeveloped.

Or: Well focused responses which address the question directly and demonstrate a **good understanding of the issues** raised by it. The account is likely to have a coherent structure and may be argued consistently. However, **supporting evidence will still be sparse**, perhaps including a few relevant examples with just a sentence on each. Detailed appraisal of specific studies will not therefore be possible. Include at this level responses which are of Level 6 quality but which have only addressed half of a question which contains two main elements.

Level 5 **18-21 marks: AO1 (15-17) AO2 (3-4)****Good response**

Either: Responses containing **considerable, well-focused relevant material** either in the form of 1-2 detailed case studies or a range of 4-6 shorter examples with some relevant development. Expect at least the equivalent of a sentence on each. **Analysis will be present** although this will not necessarily be consistent and not all the data will be appraised. Evaluation and assessment of the relative merits of different sources and lines of argument will be limited. A conclusion will be reached about the main element in the question.

Or: Responses which address the question directly and precisely, demonstrate **a very good understanding of the issues** raised by it. The account will be well structured and should be argued consistently. Appraisal of specific studies may be limited since supporting evidence will be relatively thin. This may include under developed case studies or a wide range of very short examples.

Level 6 **22-25: AO1 (18-20) AO2 (4-5)****Very good to excellent response**

Responses which explore issues in **greater depth or achieve sharper focus in argument** than at Level 5. While the two elements of critical analysis and relevant supporting evidence are both present these **may still be slightly unbalanced**. The essay will be well structured, largely analytical in approach and will address most aspects of the question. The candidate is able to sustain a logical and structured argument supported by appropriate examples, drawn from a particular archaeological context or from several. At this level two or three well developed and detailed case studies should be expected or at least 4 shorter ones, each of which contain several sentences of relevant material. The candidate will demonstrate an ability to successfully appraise some of the evidence and make comparisons. However, not every piece of data will necessarily be successfully linked to the specific demands of the question. Similarly, not all the case studies will supply sufficient detail or show sufficient discrimination in choice of material. Evaluation will be present, perhaps in a developed conclusion which answers the question. There should also be some awareness of the limitations of the evidence.

Reserve 25 marks for **exceptional responses**. These may display an ability to stand back from the detail; to consider a range of interpretations and reach a personal but well supported judgement, which appreciates the interconnectedness of things.

Deciding on marks within a level

One of the purposes of examining is to differentiate between responses in order to help awarders distinguish clearly and fairly between candidates. We want to avoid too much “bunching” of marks which can lead to regression to the mean. A key element here is the way examiners approach the work. Given the constraints of time and circumstance, candidates will not produce perfect work. Ideally you should take a ‘cup half full’ rather than ‘cup half empty’ approach to responses above Level 2. This should help you to use the full range of marks available. Start by allocating the essay to the level which best describes it even though it may not be a perfect fit. If you really cannot decide between a level, award the response the top

mark of the lower level where the decision is between Levels 1-2 or 2-3 and at the bottom of the higher level in all other cases.

Where you are confident about a level, you should start by placing the essay on one of the middle marks for that level. Next consider whether you feel that mark to be about right, slightly generous or slightly harsh in comparison with other responses at that level. In the latter cases move the essay out to the lower or higher mark in the level. In making decisions away from the middle of the level, examiners should ask themselves whether the response is:

- precise in its use of factual information?
- appropriately detailed?
- factually accurate?
- appropriately balanced, or markedly better in some areas than in others?
- generally coherent in expression and cogent in development (as appropriate to the level awarded)?
- well-presented as to general use of syntax, spelling, punctuation and grammar?

The latter two points indicate how the candidate's quality of language might influence the award of marks within a given level of response and complement the information given elsewhere.

Quality of Written Communication

The Quality of Written Communication (QWC) exhibited by the candidates will influence his or her level of performance, and performance within a particular level, as can be seen from the descriptors which follow here.

At **Levels 1 and 2**, candidates are likely to display poor communication skills, work being characterised by disjointed prose, poor organisation and frequent lapses of spelling and grammar.

At **Level 3**, communication skills are likely to remain limited and may be adequate at best. At the lower end of the level spelling and grammatical errors are likely to be frequent and answers will show limited powers of organisation. At the higher end there may still be insecure structuring of paragraphs and weaknesses of expression breaking the flow of the answer.

At **Levels 4 and 5**, communication skills will be generally effective and organisation serviceable. Though spelling and grammar will be sound there may be passages of less well directed writing or an overly schematic approach.

At **Level 6**, the candidate will show strong communication skills, with arguments logically structured, in good English, coherently expressed and cogently developed.

Question 2

Discuss the archaeological evidence for the decline or collapse of past societies.

(25 marks)

Target: AO1 (20) AO2 (5)

Use generic levels.

Indicative Content

Emphasis in answers above Level 1 should be on archaeological sources rather than historic or classical accounts. The most likely responses are accounts of devastation as the result of invasion or military defeat. Lower level responses will identify causes but may also assert links to specific examples. Better responses will look at particular sites and assess the evidence. The end of Roman Britain is a likely focus. Candidates taking a wider view may look for signs of economic or social stress (quality of coinage, changes in trade patterns or ritual etc) or ecological changes (human remains, diet, environment). The Maya collapse is a likely candidate here. Top level responses should reach a conclusion about whether it is possible to identify the key factor(s). Responses which do not discuss evidence should be limited to a maximum of Level 4.

Question 3

To what extent can the nature of society be gauged from individual dwellings?

(25 marks)

Target: AO1 (20) AO2 (5)

Use generic levels.

Indicative Content

The focus here must be on what can be discerned about society. Responses which focus on function alone or are simply descriptive of range are unlikely to be relevant except by implication. The most likely responses will be those that focus on status and ranking and perhaps follow a social-evolutionary framework. If this is the sole focus and is done well then allow to reach Level 4 but expect a wider range for higher bands. Other possible areas for exploration might include: size of household or residential units, scale of society, relationships between different units, internal divisions within residential groups and their basis, specialism and gender.

Lengthy detailed descriptions with very limited conclusions e.g. 'this shows x's status' or 'this shows an egalitarian society' should be limited to a maximum of Level 4.

Question 4

‘All landscapes are the product of human activity.’ Discuss.

(25 marks)

Target: AO1 (20) AO2 (5)

Use generic levels.

Indicative Content

This is potentially a very wide ranging essay. At lower levels, responses are likely to adopt an ACH2 type approach and identify how we know about past environments and the human impact on them. Others may simply identify features in the landscape made by humans. Better answers will draw on specific sites or areas to identify how human agency shaped the landscape (and what else was involved). At the top level expect conclusions to address extent of human impact and perhaps differentiate between different periods or places.

Answers which do not address the evidence in the landscape should be limited to a maximum of Level 4.