



**General Certificate of Education
June 2011**

A2 History 2041

HIS3E

Unit 3E

France and the Enlightenment:

Absolutism Under Threat, 1743–1789

Final

Mark Scheme

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.

Further copies of this Mark Scheme are available to download from the AQA Website: www.aqa.org.uk

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Generic Introduction for A2

The A2 History specification is based on the assessment objectives laid down in QCA's GCE History subject criteria and published in the AQA specification booklet. These cover the skills, knowledge and understanding which are expected of A Level candidates. Most questions address more than one objective since a good historian must be able to combine a range of skills and knowledge. Consequently, the marking scheme which follows is a 'levels of response' scheme and assesses candidates' historical skills in the context of their knowledge and understanding of History.

The levels of response are a graduated recognition of how candidates have demonstrated their abilities in the Assessment Objectives. Candidates who predominantly address AO1(a) by writing narrative or description will perform at Level 1 or low Level 2 if some comment is included. Candidates who provide more explanation – (AO1(b), supported by the relevant selection of material, AO1(a)) – will perform at Level 2 or low Level 3 depending on their synoptic understanding and linkage of ideas. Candidates who provide explanation with evaluation, judgement and an awareness of historical interpretations will be addressing all 3 AOs (AO1(a); AO1(b); AO2(b)) and will have access to the higher mark ranges.

To obtain an award of Level 3 or higher, candidates will need to address the synoptic requirements of A Level. The open-ended essay questions set are, by nature, synoptic and encourage a range of argument. Differentiation between performance at Levels 3, 4, and 5 therefore depends on how a candidate's knowledge and understanding are combined and used to support an argument and the how that argument is communicated.

The mark scheme emphasises features which measure the extent to which a candidate has begun to '*think like a historian*' and show higher order skills. As indicated in the level criteria, candidates will show their historical understanding by:

- The way the requirements of the question are interpreted
- The quality of the arguments and the range/depth/type of material used in support
- The presentation of the answer (including the level of communication skills)
- The awareness and use of differing historical interpretations
- The degree of independent judgement and conceptual understanding shown

It is expected that A2 candidates will perform to the highest level possible for them and the requirements for Level 5, which demands the highest level of expertise have therefore been made deliberately challenging in order to identify the most able candidates.

CRITERIA FOR MARKING GCE HISTORY:

A2 EXAMINATION PAPERS

General Guidance for Examiners (to accompany Level Descriptors)

Deciding on a level and the award of marks within a level

It is of vital importance that examiners familiarise themselves with the generic mark scheme and apply it consistently, as directed by the Principal Examiner, in order to facilitate comparability across options.

The indicative mark scheme for each paper is designed to illustrate some of the material that candidates might refer to (knowledge) and some of the approaches and ideas they might develop (skills). It is not, however, prescriptive and should only be used to exemplify the generic mark scheme.

When applying the generic mark scheme, examiners will constantly need to exercise judgement to decide which level fits an answer best. Few essays will display all the characteristics of a level, so deciding the most appropriate will always be the first task.

Each level has a range of marks and for an essay which has a strong correlation with the level descriptors the middle mark should be given. However, when an answer has some of the characteristics of the level above or below, or seems stronger or weaker on comparison with many other candidates' responses to the same question, the mark will need to be adjusted up or down.

When deciding on the mark within a level, the following criteria should be considered *in relation to the level descriptors*. Candidates should never be doubly penalised. If a candidate with poor communication skills has been placed in Level 2, he or she should not be moved to the bottom of the level on the basis of the poor quality of written communication. On the other hand, a candidate with similarly poor skills, whose work otherwise matched the criteria for Level 4 should be adjusted downwards within the level.

Criteria for deciding marks within a level:

- Depth and precision in the use of factual information
- Depth and originality in the development of an argument
- The extent of the synoptic links
- The quality of written communication (grammar, spelling, punctuation and legibility; an appropriate form and style of writing; clear and coherent organisation of ideas, including the use of specialist vocabulary)
- The way the answer is brought together in the conclusion

June 2011

A2 Unit 3: The State and the People: Change and Continuity

HIS3E: France and the Enlightenment: Absolutism Under Threat, 1743–1789

Question 1

- 01** 'The Parlements were entirely motivated by self interest in the reign of Louis XV.'
Assess the validity of this view. (45 marks)

Target: AO1(a), AO1(b), AO2(b)

Generic Mark Scheme for essays at A2

- Nothing written worthy of credit. **0**
- L1:** Answers will display a limited understanding of the demands of the question. They may **either** contain some descriptive material which is only loosely linked to the focus of the question **or** they may address only a part of the question. Alternatively, they may contain some explicit comment but will make few, if any, synoptic links and will have limited accurate and relevant historical support. There will be little, if any, awareness of differing historical interpretations. The response will be limited in development and skills of written communication will be weak. **1-6**
- L2:** Answers will show some understanding of the demands of the question. They will **either** be primarily descriptive with few explicit links to the question **or** they may contain explicit comment but show limited relevant factual support. They will display limited understanding of differing historical interpretations. Historical debate may be described rather than used to illustrate an argument and any synoptic links will be undeveloped. Answers will be coherent but weakly expressed and/or poorly structured. **7-15**
- L3:** Answers will show an understanding of the demands of the question. They will provide some assessment, backed by relevant and appropriately selected evidence, which may, however, lack depth. There will be some synoptic links made between the ideas, arguments and information included although these may not be highly developed. There will be some understanding of varying historical interpretations. Answers will be clearly expressed and show reasonable organisation in the presentation of material. **16-25**
- L4:** Answers will show a good understanding of the demands of the question. They will be mostly analytical in approach and will show some ability to link ideas/arguments and information and offer some judgement. Answers will show an understanding of different ways of interpreting material and may refer to historical debate. Answers will be well-organised and display good skills of written communication. **26-37**
- L5:** Answers will show a very good understanding of the demands of the question. The ideas, arguments and information included will be wide-ranging, carefully chosen and closely interwoven to produce a sustained and convincing answer with a high level of synopticity. Conceptual depth, independent judgement and a mature historical understanding, informed by a well-developed understanding of historical interpretations and debate, will be displayed. Answers will be well-structured and fluently written. **38-45**
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Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and candidates are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.

Candidates will clearly need a good understanding of the role of the parlements in the Ancien Regime. In addition, whilst there will probably be an overwhelming focus on the Paris Parlement, the better responses might well include evidence from the provincial parlements as well. Very effective answers will also make some attempt to define exactly whom the parlements may have done more harm than good to.

Candidates may refer to some of the following material in support of the notion of self interest:

- Parlements, and especially the Paris Parlement, may be considered to have consistently attempted to carve a more substantial constitutional role in French Politics, at least one that reached beyond the merely judicial. In so doing the monarchy's political authority was weakened
- Parlement's increasing use of remonstrance, and especially the publication of preambles helped parlement to win the struggle for control of the public sphere. The damage done to the monarch was considerable, especially in the pamphleteering campaigns of Le Paige and Moreau
- Parlement's support of Jansenism did much to further the cause of Gallicanism and further cast the magistrates as protectors of fundamental law. Yet this was clearly in contravention of the will of the monarch. Support of Jansenism may be seen as a political ploy
- the Successful campaign against the Jesuits proves the dominance that the Parlement had acquired by the end of the period
- the fact that Maupeou and the Triumvirate were obliged to reform the existing parlements in 1771 further proves contemporary opinion of the damage that they had done, and the opposition they presented to necessary reform that conflicted with their own privileges as magistrates.

Nevertheless, there are a number of other factors to consider:

- the magistrates were the only effective check on ministerial despotism. The increasing use of remonstrance was not a consequence of the ambitions of magistrates but was rather the consequence of ambitious ministers
- Louis XV failed to control the ambitions of ministers. The Maupeou Revolution occurred simply because the Triumvirate, keen for power, saw the Parlement as the only potential obstacle. Parlement was therefore a positive force in the Ancien Regime
- Jansenism was a matter of conscience for the few magistrates that professed such religious inclinations. Likewise, the fear provoked by the Jesuits was genuine and deeply felt by magistrates. The removal of religious dissension secured domestic peace in France
- Parlement was merely protecting the fundamental laws of France. The magistrates were not unwilling to consider reform, and were certainly not disloyal – the Trial of Damiens testifies to this. Remonstrance was legal, it was pursued by the magistrates.

In conclusion, candidates may:

- suggest that individual magistrates certainly agitated for a greater presence in the constitution, for example in the expulsion of the Jesuits, but that this hardly amounted to a coordinated programme from the parlementaires
- conclusions inevitably depend on perspective. To Louis XV and the ministers Parlement became an increasingly troublesome court, but this court did manage to win over the public sphere to the idea of protecting fundamental law.

Question 2

- 02** How successful were the financial policies of the French Crown in the years 1743 to 1787? (45 marks)

Target: AO1(a), AO1(b), AO2(b)

Generic Mark Scheme for essays at A2

- Nothing written worthy of credit. **0**
- L1:** Answers will display a limited understanding of the demands of the question. They may **either** contain some descriptive material which is only loosely linked to the focus of the question **or** they may address only a part of the question. Alternatively, they may contain some explicit comment but will make few, if any, synoptic links and will have limited accurate and relevant historical support. There will be little, if any, awareness of differing historical interpretations. The response will be limited in development and skills of written communication will be weak. **1-6**
- L2:** Answers will show some understanding of the demands of the question. They will **either** be primarily descriptive with few explicit links to the question **or** they may contain explicit comment but show limited relevant factual support. They will display limited understanding of differing historical interpretations. Historical debate may be described rather than used to illustrate an argument and any synoptic links will be undeveloped. Answers will be coherent but weakly expressed and/or poorly structured. **7-15**
- L3:** Answers will show an understanding of the demands of the question. They will provide some assessment, backed by relevant and appropriately selected evidence, which may, however, lack depth. There will be some synoptic links made between the ideas, arguments and information included although these may not be highly developed. There will be some understanding of varying historical interpretations. Answers will be clearly expressed and show reasonable organisation in the presentation of material. **16-25**
- L4:** Answers will show a good understanding of the demands of the question. They will be mostly analytical in approach and will show some ability to link ideas/arguments and information and offer some judgement. Answers will show an understanding of different ways of interpreting material and may refer to historical debate. Answers will be well-organised and display good skills of written communication. **26-37**
- L5:** Answers will show a very good understanding of the demands of the question. The ideas, arguments and information included will be wide-ranging, carefully chosen and closely interwoven to produce a sustained and convincing answer with a high level of synopticity. Conceptual depth, independent judgement and a mature historical understanding, informed by a well-developed understanding of historical interpretations and debate, will be displayed. Answers will be well-structured and fluently written. **38-45**
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Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and candidates are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.

Candidates will need to keep firmly focused on finance, although economic reforms and objectives may well be credited if explicitly linked by the candidate to the question.

Candidates should clearly identify what the objectives of financial policy were. The better responses may well identify a good range of motives for policy change including political and personal motives. Ostensibly the need to keep fighting war, such as the Seven Years War would have been a substantial motive, as was the need to finance French involvement in the American War of Independence. However, candidates may well argue that the reforms of various ministers including Choiseul and most obviously Necker had more to do with fulfilling personal ambition than with the needs of the state. Likewise, those that argue a philosophical motivation might comment upon the increasing influence of the Physiocrats and the efforts of Turgot to prove the fundamental tenets of his beliefs.

Candidates may refer to some of the following material in support of success:

- France remained able to fight major wars throughout this period. Despite the fears that the American War would mean immediate financial disaster, this did not prove to be the case
- bankruptcy was an increasing possibility yet remained something that did not happen until the end of the period, at least beyond the partial
- the Compte Rendu of 1781 certainly proved vital to the maintenance of Necker's reputation, and might therefore be considered proof enough of the success of financial policy. However, the Compte Rendu also served to maintain the availability of credit and to keep the financial system lubricated
- Turgot and Brienne successfully introduced a range of financial reforms that at least proved that innovation was not alien to financial ministers. The failure at the end was not in the financial system which consistently provided adequate money throughout the period
- the only time that the books were balanced and substantial financial reform maintained came during the Maupeou years when political opposition had been removed. Any failure was not financial.

Nevertheless, there are a number of other factors to consider that indicate failure:

- the initial calling of the Estates General and the political crisis of the last years of the Ancien Regime might very reasonably be considered the product of a consistent financial crisis, or at least the inadequacies of the existing inequitable system
- whilst wars were fought throughout the period, they were financed by means of credit. Whilst the short term objectives were achieved they came at the cost of bankruptcy and crisis in the longer term
- whilst some innovative reform was attempted such as the free trade in grain and the reduction in internal customs barriers, the monarchs proved unable to maintain support for their finance ministers. Hence reform was limited in scope and short term in impact
- balancing of the books was achieved but only when foreign wars were not being fought. Peace brought prosperity, not French financial policy
- candidates might well use specific knowledge to argue that the political crisis of the period 1743 to 1787 was fuelled, if not initiated, by financial concerns and by the Parlements' efforts to develop a political position. Hence the financial policy failed to bring stability to France.

Question 3

- 03** To what extent did Louis XVI fail to assert his authority in the years 1787 to 1789?
(45 marks)

Target: AO1(a), AO1(b), AO2(b)

Generic Mark Scheme for essays at A2

- Nothing written worthy of credit. **0**
- L1:** Answers will display a limited understanding of the demands of the question. They may **either** contain some descriptive material which is only loosely linked to the focus of the question **or** they may address only a part of the question. Alternatively, they may contain some explicit comment but will make few, if any, synoptic links and will have limited accurate and relevant historical support. There will be little, if any, awareness of differing historical interpretations. The response will be limited in development and skills of written communication will be weak. **1-6**
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Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and candidates are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.

Candidates will need to keep firmly focused on the notion of authority, rather than simply of success. Better types of response might well seek to define the nature of monarchical authority in this period. There might, in addition be some attempt to challenge the premise of the question and assertion that absolutism was only ever a mythical construct; this interpretation should be given due credit but the focus of the question should not be lost.

Candidates may refer to some of the following material in support of failure of authority:

- 1789 witnessed the collapse of monarchical authority. The end of the Ancien Regime is proof enough of the failure of Louis XVI as an absolute monarch
- Louis XVI was desperate to acquire popular acclaim and not to be as unpopular as his grandfather. He came to the throne famously declaring that he wished to be loved. Such a focus on the public sphere was hardly an attribute of an authoritarian monarch
- one of Louis XVI's greatest mistakes was grounded in this desire for popular acclaim. The return of the pre 1771 Parlements and the reversal of the Maupeou revolution did great harm to the long term political authority of the monarchy, and in fact did not bring many tangible political advantages even in the short term. Certainly, there is no evidence of any sense of duty or thanks from the political bodies in the period 1787 to 1789
- Louis XVI failed to support his ministers in the face of opposition. Turgot and Brienne had reforming tendencies which may well have brought great benefit to the monarchy, but the king failed to provide for them
- Louis XVI remained susceptible to faction and especially the influence of Marie Antoinette
- the recall of Necker proves the absolute decay in the monarch's authority and more than this, Louis XVI's disinclination to involve himself any further in politics.

Nevertheless, there are a number of other factors to consider in support of demonstrating his authority:

- Louis XVI's desire for acclaim and pursuit of public support was similar to previous French monarchs and should not necessarily be considered unusual in the context of the Ancien Regime
- the fact that 1789 is seen to mark a decisive break is unhelpful. It was not seen to be by contemporaries, yet the very use of the phrase ancien regime conveys an impression of things slowly decaying in the run up to 1789
- the events of 1789 were a complex mix of short and long-term factors and certainly cannot be laid entirely at the feet of an apparent failure of monarchical authority
- the calling of the Assembly of the Notables and also the Estates General should not be seen as evidence of weakness, but rather of strength. This was an ultimately successful attempt to circumvent the increased constitutional demands of the Paris Parlement.

In conclusion, candidates may:

- argue that whilst authority declined in this period, clearly evidenced by the revolution in 1789, this was by no means an inevitable consequence of declining authority
- even if authority were found to be in decline, there were a number of inter-related factors responsible; to simply blame Louis XVI is too simplistic.

Converting marks into UMS marks

Convert raw marks into marks on the Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) by using the link below.

UMS conversion calculator: www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion