

# A-LEVEL ARCHAEOLOGY

ARCH2 Archaeological Skills and Methods  
Mark scheme

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2010  
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Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Assessment Writer.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' 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 from [aqa.org.uk](http://aqa.org.uk)

**SECTION A****Question 1**

Study **Figure 3** and use your own knowledge.

Outline the types of information that archaeologists can discover from using photographs such as this.

**[6 marks]**

**(Target AO1: 4, AO2: 2)**

- |     |   |            |
|-----|---|------------|
| L1: | Vague and/or listed/thin generic points. May include passing reference to the source. | <b>1-2</b> |
| L2: | More detailed generic points or undeveloped points clearly linked to the source.      | <b>3-4</b> |
| L3: | 3+ developed points with sound explanation. Link to source needed for 6 marks         | <b>5-6</b> |

**Guidance**

Expect a discussion of what the buildings looked like, name and/or functions of buildings, social status of the people using them, e.g. through the clothes. Some students may comment on the fact that this is obviously a posed shot (the blurry dog, bottom left), may link information in the photograph with interpreting the archaeological evidence, e.g. clothes fittings, or may comment on the fact that this is a 'snapshot' in time. Credit anything sensible, such as reference to related sources.

**Question 2**

Study **Figure 4** and use your own knowledge.

Outline the difficulties an archaeologist might encounter when working in an urban area such as the Cumberland Street/Gloucester Street site.

**[12 marks]**

**(Target AO1: 10, AO2: 2)**

- |     |   |              |
|-----|---|--------------|
| L1: | List or thin description of one difficulty.   | <b>1-3</b>   |
| L2: | Both parts of L1 <b>or</b> fuller description of one difficulty <b>or</b> a thin description of several difficulties. | <b>4-6</b>   |
| L3: | Fuller description of 2-3 difficulties with source reference.   | <b>7-9</b>   |
| L4: | Fuller appreciation of 4+ difficulties with appropriate source reference.   | <b>10-12</b> |

### **Guidance**

Expect discussion of working in and around buildings, flooding/high water table, heavy machinery, services and developer pressure, site security, deep and complex stratigraphy, truncation, later disturbance to deposits, small 'keyhole' trenches. This is not a question about research and rescue excavation, and students who focus on rescue issues are unlikely to achieve L3 or above.

Students may also mention that this site is within living memory and discuss the relationship with the local community. Candidates may mention geophysics and this should be credited.

**Question 3**

Study **Figure 5** and use your own knowledge.

Outline the ways in which archaeologists can show sensitivity toward the local community.

**[6 marks]**

**(Target AO1: 6)**

- |     |  |            |
|-----|--|------------|
| L1: | Thin response or a list  | <b>1</b>   |
| L2: | Thin outline of possible information with limited use of source <b>or</b> a fuller generic response.   | <b>2-4</b> |
| L3: | Fuller response with 2+ pieces of information explained and reference to source. There must be some recognition that these sites may still be in living memory for 6 marks | <b>5-6</b> |

**Guidance**

Expect some of the following: community involvement in terms of consultation to discuss any concerns or issues before the excavation begins, open days, training excavations and volunteers, meetings with the local community to present the findings of the excavation, working with local schools, oral history interviews, treating the archaeological remains respectfully, ownership of finds. Credit but do not expect a consideration of ethnicity (e.g. Aboriginal and white European ethnicities) and status (working class, convicts).

**Question 4**

Study **Figure 6(a) and 6(b)** and use your own knowledge.

Outline the ways in which archaeologists could study and record buildings such as these.

**[12 marks]**

**(Target AO1: 12)**

- |     |   |              |
|-----|---|--------------|
| L1: | Vague and/or listed/thin generic points.  | <b>1-3</b>   |
| L2: | More detailed generic points or undeveloped points linked to the source.  | <b>4-6</b>   |
| L3: | 3+ developed points linked to source. Must include both study and recording of the buildings, but may not be balanced or well organised.                                  | <b>7-9</b>   |
| L4: | 4 developed points must include balanced discussion of both study and recording of the buildings with appropriate technical vocabulary, such as standing building survey. | <b>10-12</b> |

**Guidance**

Expect desktop study (e.g., use of documents, maps, plans, drawings, photographs, oral history), standing building survey (e.g., photographs, measurements, elevation drawings), comparison to other buildings of the same type, analysis of the mortar and/or plaster, phase plans, etc. Credit, but do not expect, discussion of intra-site spatial analysis.

**Question 5**

Study **Figure 7** and use your own knowledge.

What information can archaeologists discover through the study of animal bones such as these?

**[6 marks]**

**(Target AO1: 4, AO2: 2)**

- |     |   |            |
|-----|---|------------|
| L1: | Thin outline of possible information with limited use of source <b>or</b> a fuller generic response   | <b>1-2</b> |
| L2: | Fuller response to either what the bones can tell archaeologists or how archaeologists can use that information (e.g. economics) and appropriate reference to source. | <b>3-4</b> |
| L3: | Both parts of level 2.  | <b>5-6</b> |

**Guidance**

Expect species present, age, sex, butchery and use, e.g. dairy, meat, traction, industry (leather, horn working, glue), indication of status of the building or area such as food consumption or animal processing or presence as a ritual deposit. Accept dating, isotopic analysis and disease.

**Question 6**

Study **Figures 8(a) and 8(b)** and use your own knowledge.

What information can archaeologists reveal through the study of artefacts such as these?

**[10 marks]**

**(Target AO1: 7, AO2: 3)**

- |     |   |             |
|-----|---|-------------|
| L1: | List of possible information.   | <b>1-2</b>  |
| L2: | Thin outline of possible information with limited use of sources <b>or</b> fuller generic response. | <b>3-5</b>  |
| L3: | Fuller response with 1-2 pieces of information and appropriate reference to sources.                | <b>6-7</b>  |
| L4: | L3 for 3+ pieces of information.  | <b>8-10</b> |

**NB** For L4 students must go beyond the physical attributes of the pottery and consider who was using the pottery, e.g. status

**Guidance**

Expect discussion of size, shape, function, quantification methods, dating (TL, typology), trade, manufacture and status. Credit, but do not expect organic residue analysis.

+1 if students discount TL on the basis of its destructiveness or its inaccuracy compared to other methods

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**Question 7**

Study **Figure 9** and use your own knowledge.

Explain how archaeologists might study stone artefacts such as this.

**[8 marks]**

**(Target AO1: 7, AO2:1)**

- |     |   |            |
|-----|---|------------|
| L1: | Description of source (max 1) <b>or</b> a list  | <b>1-2</b> |
| L2: | 1 method named and explained or a more complete list with some reference to the source              | <b>3-4</b> |
| L3: | 2 methods named and briefly explained with some reference to the source or 3 methods with 2 named   | <b>5-6</b> |
| L4: | 3+ methods named and explained with appropriate technical vocabulary and appropriate use of source. | <b>7-8</b> |

**Guidance**

Expect typology, petrological thin section, microwear, ethnography, ethnoarchaeology, refitting, experimental archaeology.

Accept references to trade if clearly linked to techniques.

## Unit ARCH2: Marking Section B essays

The knowledge-based approach of this section enables students to select content from a wide variety of contexts. As a result, highly specific mark schemes are inappropriate. The scheme must be sufficiently flexible that it can embrace whatever case studies that teachers and students may select to study in that particular year.

Marking guidance therefore falls into two main types. A broad hierarchy of levels based on the assessment objectives for all essays and then exemplification for each particular question. In the latter case the contexts and lists of expected content are simply for the sake of illustration. There are many other sets of evidence, which would provide equally good answers.

The balance of assessment objectives on this section between AO1 and AO2 is 33.3:66.6. The primary aim of the assessments is to test students' understanding of key techniques and issues in practical archaeology (AO2). Depending on the questions chosen they will focus, to a greater or lesser extent, upon the basis of archaeological knowledge, its limitations, and the nature of the factors affecting continuity and change in the past. Understanding of AO1 will also be a key factor in differentiating responses.

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 your team leader.

### Generic Essay Levels Mark Scheme

**Below Level 1**                      **0 marks**

**Answers with no merit or relevance to the question set.**

Responses at this level may be of reasonable length and may contain archaeological examples and material but they will not respond to demands of this specific question. The student may have incorrectly interpreted a concept or simply responded to a word or phrase in the question by writing all they can think of about that 'trigger'.

**Level 1**                      **1-6 marks**      **AO1 (2) AO2 (4)**

**Weak or undeveloped answers.**

**Either: A** Responses at the bottom of this level (1-3 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 randomly rather than purposely link to the question. More typically (4-6 marks) the student 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:** **B** Alternatively the response may consist of a very weak description of technique(s) or a very thin account of a site(s), some of which may be relevant to the question but which are undeveloped. Nevertheless, some of these could have been developed into higher level responses.

At Level 1, where students submit full essays they are likely to display poor communication skills, work being characterised by disjointed prose, poor organisation and frequent lapses of spelling and grammar. This level also includes 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**      **7-12 marks: AO1 (4) AO2 (8).**

**Limited responses with some merit.**

**Either:** Responses which demonstrate understanding by including some material relevant to the question. However, it is likely that the student has been unable to organise their work successfully in order to meet the demands of the question. Typically this may include the very basic description of techniques with little or no exemplification. 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:** **B** Answers which do address the question and demonstrate some understanding of the issues, perhaps making several valid points. However, there will be very little or no relevant archaeological examples or explanation of technique(s) to support their case.

At Level 2, students are likely to display some poor communication skills. Some of their work may be characterised by disjointed prose, poor organisation and frequent lapses of spelling and grammar. This level also includes good, detailed essay plans and promising essays which have not been developed (e.g. very brief or truncated).

**Level 3**      **13-18 marks: AO1 (6) AO2 (12).**

**Sound responses.**

**Either:** **A** Responses which largely contains material relevant to this question and where the student 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 focussed on issues raised by the question. Introductions and conclusions are likely to be limited at this level and appraisal will be simple.

**Or:** **B** 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 limited explanation of archaeological technique(s) to support their case.  
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; good generic responses which include no exemplification; detailed accounts of archaeological sites which only partially address the question.

At Level 3 communication skills may 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.

**Level 4**      **19-24 marks: AO1 (8) AO2 (16).**

**Good responses.**

**Either: A** Responses largely containing well focused, relevant material organised in the form of 1-2 explanations of techniques or a range of 3+ with some limited development. Reasonable exemplification will be present. The response must reach some conclusions – perhaps in the final paragraph. Depth of understanding of terms may be very good but commentary and argument will be underdeveloped.

**Or : B** 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, explanations of techniques will still be limited despite being supported by some examples. Detailed appraisal of specific techniques will not therefore be possible.

At Level 4 communication skills will generally be sound. Though spelling and grammar will be secure there may still be lapses with technical vocabulary Organisation will be sensible but there may be passages of less well directed writing or an overly schematic approach.

**Level 5**      **25-30 marks: AO1 (10) AO2 (20)**

**Very good responses.**

**Either: A** Responses containing considerable, well focused relevant material either in the form of 1-2 detailed explanations of techniques or a range of 3+ with relevant development. (Expect the equivalent of a couple of sentences on each.) Analysis will be present although at the bottom of this level this will not necessarily be consistent and not all the data will be necessarily appraised. Exemplification will be sound. Evaluation and assessment of the relative merits of different sources and lines of argument will be present. A conclusion will be reached about the main element in the question.

**Or: B** Responses which address the question directly and precisely, and demonstrate a very strong understanding of the issues raised by it. The account will be well-structured and should be argued consistently. Appraisal of specific case studies via supporting evidence will be sound.

At Level 5 communication skills will be generally effective and organisation clear and logical. Spelling and grammar will be sound, though there may be occasional errors.

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### 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 students. 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, students 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?
- Technically accurate?
- 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 student’s quality of written communication might influence the award of marks within a given level of response and complement the information given elsewhere.

### Question 8

Outline the advantages and disadvantages of experimental archaeology for studying the past.

**[30 marks]**

**Use generic levels mark scheme**

#### Indicative content

Students are most likely to focus on reconstruction. More able students will recognise that experimental archaeology has a hypothesis to test, and will also discuss experiment with artefacts, perhaps mentioning microwear analysis of stone tools.

Sites such as Butser Ancient Farm, the Overton earthwork, Schick and Toth's work with stone tools, and experiments carried out on TV programmes, e.g. butchery at Boxgrove, Ray Mears' longbow, various attempts at raising trilithons at Stonehenge, etc., are likely to feature.

This is neither a question about ethnography, nor a question about reconstruction *per se* and students who conflate these techniques are unlikely to do well.

Students need to provide a **balanced** discussion of advantages and disadvantages for levels 4 and 5.

### Question 9

Outline the post-excavation techniques archaeologists could use in a laboratory to study human remains.

**[30 marks]**

**Use generic levels mark scheme**

#### Indicative content

Students will describe and explain a variety of techniques. Expect epiphysal fusion (accept bone fusion), tooth wear, tooth eruption, tooth thin sectioning, sex determination via the pelvis, skull and general robusticity, the study of disease and DNA analysis. Credit, but do not expect isotope analysis for the areas of origin of an individual (oxygen and strontium) and in studying the diet of individuals (carbon 12:13 and nitrogen).

Material from a wide range of sites could be relevant, but the Boscombe bowmen, Amesbury Archer, the 'Gladiatrix' from London, Bangle Lady from York, a variety of Egyptian mummies, Spitalfields and Lindow Man may well feature, as well as information from sites local to students.

More able students may draw some distinction between hard and soft tissue remains.

**Question 10**

Outline the methods archaeologists could use to date organic material.

**[30 marks]**

**Use generic levels mark scheme****Indicative content**

Students will describe and explain a variety of techniques, both absolute and relative. Expect C14 dating, dendrochronology, typology, stratigraphy and TPQ/TAQ to feature. Credit, but do not expect, faunal dating. Students who do not link the methods to particular classes of artefacts are unlikely to do well. Material from a wide range of sites could be relevant, from local sites to big 'TV sites', e.g. Gresham Street, Jorvik, and the Uluburun wreck.

NB. Expect some discussion of the limitations of particular types of dating for L4+.

**Marking Grid**

<b>Question Number</b>	<b>AO1</b>	<b>AO2</b>
<b>9</b>	10	20
<b>10</b>	10	20
<b>11</b>	10	20