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# A-level **HISTORY**

Paper 2F The Sun King: Louis XIV, France and Europe, 1643–1715

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**Mark scheme**

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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.

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## GCE A Level History Paper 2 Specimen Mark Scheme

### 2F The Sun King: Louis XIV, France and Europe, 1643–1715

#### Section A

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|----------|----------|--|-------------------|
| <b>0</b> | <b>1</b> | With reference to these sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying Louis XIV's monarchy. | <b>[30 marks]</b> |
|----------|----------|--|-------------------|

*Target: AO2*

*Analyse and evaluate appropriate source material, primary and/or contemporary to the period, within the historical context.*

#### Generic Mark Scheme

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|------------|---|--------------|
| <b>L5:</b> | Shows a very good understanding of all three sources in relation to both content and provenance and combines this with a strong awareness of the historical context to present a balanced argument on their value for the particular purpose given in the question. The answer will convey a substantiated judgement. The response demonstrates a very good understanding of context.   | <b>25-30</b> |
| <b>L4:</b> | Shows a good understanding of all three sources in relation to both content and provenance and combines this with an awareness of the historical context to provide a balanced argument on their value for the particular purpose given in the question. Judgements may, however, be partial or limited in substantiation. The response demonstrates a good understanding of context.   | <b>19-24</b> |
| <b>L3:</b> | Shows some understanding of all three sources in relation to both content and provenance together with some awareness of the historical context. There may, however, be some imbalance in the degree of breadth and depth of comment offered on all three sources and the analysis may not be fully convincing. The answer will make some attempt to consider the value of the sources for the particular purpose given in the question. The response demonstrates an understanding of context. | <b>13-18</b> |
| <b>L2:</b> | The answer will be partial. It may, for example, provide some comment on the value of the sources for the particular purpose given in the question but only address one or two of the sources, or focus exclusively on content (or provenance), <b>or</b> it may consider all three sources but fail to address the value of the sources for the particular purpose given in the question. The response demonstrates some understanding of context.   | <b>7-12</b>  |
| <b>L1:</b> | The answer will offer some comment on the value of at least one source in relation to the purpose given in the question but the response will be limited and may be partially inaccurate. Comments are likely to be unsupported, vague or generalist. The response demonstrates limited understanding of context.   | <b>1-6</b>   |

Nothing worthy of credit.

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### Indicative content

**Note: This content is not prescriptive and students 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.**

**Students must deploy knowledge of the historical context to show an understanding of the relationship between the sources and the issues raised in the question, when assessing the significance of provenance, the arguments deployed in the sources and the tone and emphasis of the sources. Descriptive answers which fail to do this should be awarded no more than Level 2 at best. Answers should address both the value and the limitations of the sources for the particular question and purpose given.**

In responding to this question, students may choose to respond to each source in turn, or to adopt a more comparative approach. For example, they may pick out elements of dissatisfaction with the monarchy, shown especially in Sources B and C which are not mentioned in Source A. Either approach could be equally valid, and what follows is indicative of the evaluation which may be relevant.

**Source A:** In assessing the value of this source, students may refer to the following:

#### Provenance

- this is an eyewitness account from somebody who witnessed Louis' style of rule in France
- as the author was an outsider to the government it is entirely possible that his account has been flavoured by the extensive propaganda put forwards by the monarchy and reinforced by his stay in Versailles
- as the author was based at the French court he would not have witnessed the extent of royal authority (or lack of it) in the provinces. He was also writing in the 1670s and 1680s, when Louis' power was at its highest.

#### Content and argument

- the source discusses a myriad of ways in which the monarchy has been strengthened under Louis' personal rule. For example it gives detail about Louis' working day and clear involvement of the day-to-day running of his kingdom. This was one of Louis' motives in moving his palace to Versailles, to make this easier
- the source compares the situation before 1661, where the factions of the nobility wielded great power (e.g. the Frondes), with Louis' effective suppression of the sword nobility and use of ministers whom he himself has appointed, men like Colbert
- the source refers to Louis' domination of his ministers. This might be corroborated by his treatment of Fouquet or the very public criticisms of men like Pomponne or Colbert which he made from time to time.

#### Tone and emphasis

- the source is very flattering and perhaps reflects the author's position as a guest at Louis' court. It also indicates that the imagery of the Sun King, which was so

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prevalent at Versailles, had been effective.

**Source B:** In assessing the value of this source, students may refer to the following:

### Provenance

- Fenelon was writing in 1694, in the more troubled years of Louis' reign, when the financial burden of his aggressive foreign policy was really taking its toll domestically. This might colour his interpretation
- Fenelon was a critic of Louis, being especially critical of the Divine Right theory which Louis espoused. This, equally, might lead him to over exaggerate the negatives
- since the letter was not intended to be read by Louis and seems to be more of a private commentary by Fenelon, this might make it more honest or, possibly, more critical.

### Content and argument

- this source suggests that the power of the monarchy is declining in the second half of Louis' reign, as opposed to being strengthened. Evidence used in support of this is an increase in disturbances and rioting, which did take place and required the army to put down, e.g. the Camisards
- the poor economic situation in France is discussed. This would be in direct contrast to the economic stability that had been achieved in the earlier years of Louis' reign
- the root cause of the decline of the power of the monarchy is, according to Fenelon, Louis' aggressive foreign policy. Most notably the Nine Years War and the War of Spanish Succession were financially exhausting for France and Louis even claimed himself that he had 'loved war too much' at the end of his life.

### Tone and emphasis

- the letter is written as if directly addressing Louis, which gives the criticisms real force. The style of reflecting back on Louis' heyday (when his subjects loved him) and comparing with the present seems to fit the historical context
- however, the criticisms are very one-sided and do not take into account a lot of the positives which showed that Louis was firmly in control. The choice of language suggests that Fenelon had particular grievances.

**Source C:** In assessing the value of this source, students may refer to the following:

### Provenance

- here Louis is reflecting back on his performance as King over the first 15–20 years of his reign. He is obviously an eyewitness to the events, but clearly has a motive in writing. In line with the Sun King image which he cultivated, Louis would want to appear in a good light. This might cause him to exaggerate the problems from before his personal rule (e.g. the Frondes or the corruption)
- as Louis' memoirs were intended to work as an 'instruction manual' for the Dauphin, it is possible that the current power of the monarchy has been exaggerated – as an ideal that he should be working towards. The account could also be acting as a form of 'apology' for some of Louis' more unpopular decisions (e.g. treatment of Fouquet,

- sidelining of the nobles etc)
- it is also difficult to know how much of this was written by Louis, and how much by his ministers, who would obviously have vested interests in keeping Louis happy. Fouquet's example was a clear reminder of what happened to ministers who angered Louis.

### **Content and argument**

- the situation in the monarchy was one of turbulence, this is backed by the context – the Frondes had occurred and there was widespread financial corruption occurring. Colbert, Mazarin and Fouquet were all men who had become vastly wealthy at the expense of the Crown. The inference is that the situation has improved by the time of writing
- Louis has managed to deal with the threat of the nobles by utilising men of lesser standing (the robins) in his government. Louis was very careful to cultivate a number of the most important families and ensure that no one family was preeminent. The Le Telliers would be a good contextual example
- Louis also managed to extend the power of the monarchy through the investigations into false nobles
- Louis references other problems, such as the overburdening of the Third Estate, and rebellions within the provinces, but he is vague in explaining how he has solved these issues. He did work to lessen such problems by using intendants, for example.

### **Tone and emphasis**

- the fact that this is written by Louis, as an instruction manual, makes it overwhelmingly positive about Louis' achievements in strengthening the monarchy. Louis uses language which highlights his industry, to the detriment of others, such as his ministers. Louis' was unlikely to portray himself negatively.

**Section B**

**0 2** 'Cardinal Mazarin had a damaging influence over the French monarchy in the years 1643 to 1661.'

Assess the validity of this view.

**[25 marks]**

*Target: AO1*

*Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.*

**Generic Mark Scheme**

- L5:** Answers will display a very good understanding of the full demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively delivered. The supporting information will be well-selected, specific and precise. It will show a very good understanding of key features, issues and concepts. The answer will be fully analytical with a balanced argument and well-substantiated judgement. **21-25**
- L4:** Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. It will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment relating to the question. The answer will be well-balanced with some judgement, which may, however, be only partially substantiated. **16-20**
- L3:** Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features, but may, however, be unspecific or lack precision of detail. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be a good deal of comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance, but a number of statements may be inadequately supported and generalist. **11-15**
- L2:** The answer is descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. **6-10**
- L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1-5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

## Indicative content

**Note: This content is not prescriptive and students 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.**

Evidence that Mazarin's influence was damaging might include:

- in terms of promoting the power of the King over the nobility, Mazarin very much continued in the same vein as his predecessor, Richelieu. Patronage of many 'new men' who were essentially his 'clients' (e.g. Fouquet or Colbert) annoyed the nobility
- Mazarin was also personally unpopular, being viewed as a foreign upstart, with rumours and sleaze following him around. A key example of this would be the *Mazarinades* which circulated from 1648
- he continued with the expensive foreign wars against Spain and the Empire. Dissatisfaction with this was demonstrated by the Parliamentary *fronde* of 1648. This was actually suppressed relatively easily, but demonstrated a deep dissatisfaction with the rule of Mazarin and Anne of Austria as regents for the young King
- Paris remained extremely hostile, with Louis having to be removed on several occasions, for his own safety. Royal authority was also arguably diminished in 1651 when prominent citizens demanded to see the King sleeping in his room at the palace to ensure that he was still in the capital. They clearly did not trust Mazarin and Anne
- alienation of the nobility became so serious that even the Princes of the Blood, namely Conde, Conti and Longueville, became *frondeurs* in 1651. Mazarin attempted to have them arrested, but lacked the public support for this and was forced to flee into exile. Conde's rebellion ultimately failed, but he was so alienated that, for a time, he went to fight for the Spanish King. This was a real blow to the French as Conde was a very talented general
- Mazarin's expensive foreign affairs crippled the French economy, with the Crown being 451m livres in debt in 1661. There were no attempts to reform the inequitable and inefficient taxation system or to improve agriculture and there was an overreliance on the selling of offices and noble status, which would cause Louis issues in the future
- Mazarin himself had embezzled money for his own benefit, not helping the image or position of the Crown. The figure is estimated to have been around 39 million livres.

Evidence that Mazarin had a positive influence might include:

- Mazarin worked tirelessly to achieve a European situation where France would be able to dominate. He managed to bring the Spanish to their knees through use of an unlikely alliance with Cromwell and his New Model Army and then negotiated the important marriage alliance between Louis and Marie-Therese. All of Louis' future successes in foreign policy were based upon the favourable position Mazarin left for him through the Treaty of Westphalia and the Treaty of the Pyrenees
- the image of Louis XIV as a divinely appointed ruler who should be worshipped (the 'Sun King') was definitely a political message which was carefully cultivated by Mazarin. Louis could build upon this basis as soon as he took personal control in 1661
- the long regency and minority of Louis XIV could easily have led to the power of the monarchy being diminished, with ambitious lawyers from the *parlement* taking control. Mazarin managed to prevent this



- Mazarin trained Louis in all aspects of government and kingship. This meant that he was both confident and capable when he decided to assume personal rule, without a Principal Minister in 1661
- the monarchy survived the *frondes* and other domestic rebellions (e.g. Marseilles) without seeming to lose much authority. Indeed, even when Mazarin himself was incredibly unpopular, much affection remained for Louis himself
- Mazarin was certainly capable of balancing the egos of the lawyers within parlement, often allowing them to save face when giving in to various financial demands
- Mazarin provided Louis with a capable and loyal team of ministers to assist him in the early years of his reign. The most notable of these were Colbert and Le Tellier.

Students may conclude that, whilst Mazarin himself was personally unpopular, he was successful in continuing the development of absolutist monarchy begun by Richelieu and Louis XIII. This was especially commendable given the context within which he was operating.

**0 3** 'The strength of France's enemies best explains the failure of Louis XIV's foreign policy in the years 1685 to 1715.'

Assess the validity of this view.

**[25 marks]**

*Target: AO1*

*Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.*

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- L3:** Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features, but may, however, be unspecific or lack precision of detail. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be a good deal of comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance, but a number of statements may be inadequately supported and generalist. **11-15**
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- L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1-5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

## Indicative content

**Note: This content is not prescriptive and students 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.**

Evidence that the strength of France's enemies best explains failure might include:

- by 1689 the balance of power in Europe had changed, William of Orange had secured the English throne and the Emperor had defeated the Turks at Mohacs. This meant that, instead of facing a small collection of German princes, Louis was faced with fighting a 'Grand Alliance'
- during the Nine Years War, Louis would have to use his forces on numerous fronts at the same time. This put enormous strain on France domestically and his capability to fight effectively
- the strength and military capability of Louis' enemies meant that many of the campaigns in Flanders ended in stalemate, with much use of defensive trenches
- Louis did manage to win a string of battles and encounters in the Nine Years War, but these failed to be decisive as there were also numerous losses, caused by the strength of other powers, e.g. the failure to put James II back on the English throne or the unwelcome distraction of Victor Amadeus of Savoy
- the terms agreed by Louis at Ryswick saw Louis returning most of his gains from the reunions, except Strasbourg. This might suggest that the size of the coalition facing him had led him to this position. He had aggressively pursued European territory as an opportunist before 1685, but he knew to back down now that the balance of power had changed
- Louis and William of Orange were both clearly intent upon avoiding war over the Spanish Succession, as demonstrated by the Partition Treaties. This reflects an awareness from Louis that the balance of power had turned away from France
- the Grand Alliance ranged against Louis after 1701 benefitted from the financial strength provided by the Netherlands and Britain, as well as the military brilliance of Marlborough.

Evidence that other factors caused the failure of Louis' foreign policy might include:

- Louis was determined and arrogant enough to expect the other European powers to accept the temporary agreements made at Ratisbon as permanent. This was viewed by the other European states as aggressive and unacceptable. He had completely misjudged their mood. The League of Augsburg was formed as a direct response to Louis' arrogance and bullying
- in devastating the Palatinate, Louis was hoping to pre-empt any attack from the Emperor. This was a grave miscalculation and actually prompted the start of the Nine Years War
- the Nine Years War ended in a failure for France because of economic concerns. Both sides were actually fairly evenly matched and had established excellent defensive tactics. Louis could not really be blamed for this
- Louis was unable to sustain his later wars because of economic issues at home—both long and short-term problems
- many of Louis' best generals, e.g. Luxembourg, had died and proved difficult to replace.

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Many may argue that Louis caused the wars at the end of his reign by his overbearing and aggressive manner throughout his whole reign. He continued in this vein until the League of Augsburg was formed to try and stop him. Even in the War of Spanish Succession, Louis was responsible for the formal opening of hostilities because he had acted provocatively. As Louis was facing a relatively strong coalition in both of these wars, it made success less likely. However, some students may wish to argue that Louis' foreign policy was not a complete failure. This is a valid line of argument if supported.

**0 4** 'The financial problems of the French Crown were entirely caused by Louis XIV's wars.'

Assess the validity of this view.

**[25 marks]**

*Target: AO1*

*Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.*

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- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

## Indicative content

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Evidence which suggests that wars were responsible for French financial problems might include:

- during his minority Louis' regents were fighting expensive wars on his behalf, most notably with Spain, and so, when he assumed personal rule in 1661 he had a debt of 451m livres
- France was behind other powers, such as the Dutch, in terms of overseas trade, but had tried to remedy this through the founding of Overseas Trading Companies. During times of war trade was, of course, negatively affected. The Dutch War, in fact, helped to cause the failure of the Trading companies
- Louis engaged in expensive army reforms in the 1660s under Le Tellier and maintained a huge standing army of up to 400 000. He even maintained this during times of peace, which was an enormous drain on the Crown
- Louis' negotiation at Ryswick led to him ceding much of the territory gained since Nymegen. This was forced upon him because he could not finance the war any longer. He had tried such measures as extraordinary taxation, but had been forced to revert to the policy of selling offices, which would cause more problems further down the line
- Louis struggled to maintain the cost of the War of Spanish Succession. Indeed, he tried to sue for peace on several occasions and eventually negotiated a peace which vastly reduced French influence in 1714, because he was strapped for cash. The situation at home in France was dire as a result. Stories of widespread famine and cannibalism were prevalent around Europe.

Evidence which suggests that other factors caused French financial problems might include:

- the French taxation system was inherently unequal and relied upon extracting most of the revenue from those least able to afford it; the Third Estate. The richer citizens were either exempt through virtue of noble birth or they were part of the clergy. Wealthy merchants and artisans would make one-off payments to secure noble status and, thus, tax exemption
- Louis, especially at the start of his reign, struggled to collect the taxes he needed effectively. There was a big shortfall and this was not helped by the confusing mix of local customs and privileges. Colbert worked hard to fix many of the worst problems but much of his good work was undone by the Dutch War
- as Louis was desperate for ready supplies of cash, many of the taxes were collected by tax farmers. These men were often corrupt or inefficient
- some of Louis' ministers were corrupt, e.g. Fouquet.

Good answers may show that the French fiscal system was very corrupt and inefficient generally. Colbert had dealt with a lot of problems and had improved the situation immensely, but the Dutch War undid a lot of this progress.



