

GCE
AS and A Level

History

AS exams 2009 onwards
A2 exams 2010 onwards

Unit 1L **Specimen mark scheme**

Version 1.1





General Certificate of Education

AS History

Unit 1: HIS1L

Britain, 1906–1951

Specimen Mark Scheme

The specimen assessment materials are provided to give centres a reasonable idea of the general shape and character of the planned question papers and mark schemes in advance of the first operational exams.

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 AS

The AS 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 historical skills, which include knowledge and understanding, are usually deployed together. 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 Level 2 depending on its relevance. Candidates who provide more explanation – (AO1(b), supported by the relevant selection of material, AO1(a)) – will perform at high Level 2 or low-mid Level 3 depending on how explicit they are in their response to the question. Candidates who provide explanation with evaluation, judgement and an awareness of historical interpretations will be addressing all 3 AOs (AO1(a); AO1(b); AO2(a) and (b) and will have access to the higher mark ranges. AO2(a) which requires the evaluation of source material is assessed in Unit 2.

Differentiation between Levels 3, 4 and 5 is judged according to the extent to which candidates meet this range of assessment objectives. At Level 3 the answers will show more characteristics of the AO1 objectives, although there should be elements of AO2. At Level 4, AO2 criteria, particularly an understanding of how the past has been interpreted, will be more in evidence and this will be even more dominant at Level 5. The demands on written communication, particularly the organisation of ideas and the use of specialist vocabulary also increase through the various levels so that a candidate performing at the highest AS level is already well prepared for the demands of A2.

CRITERIA FOR MARKING GCE HISTORY:**AS 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:

- The accuracy of factual information
- The level of detail
- The depth and precision displayed
- The quality of links and arguments
- 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)
- Appropriate references to historical interpretation and debate
- The conclusion

Specimen Mark Scheme**GCE AS History Unit 1: Change and Consolidation****HIS1L: Britain, 1906–1951****Generic Mark Scheme****Question 1(a), Question 2(a) and Question 3(a)**

- L1:** Answers will contain either some descriptive material which is only loosely linked to the focus of the question or some explicit comment with little, if any, appropriate support. Answers are likely to be generalised and assertive. The response will be limited in development and skills of written communication will be weak. **0-2**
- L2:** Answers will demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of the demands of the question. They will **either** be almost entirely descriptive with few explicit links to the question **or** they will provide some explanations backed by evidence that is limited in range and/or depth. Answers will be coherent but weakly expressed and/or poorly structured. **3-6**
- L3:** Answers will demonstrate good understanding of the demands of the question providing relevant explanations backed by appropriately selected information, although this may not be full or comprehensive. Answers will, for the most part, be clearly expressed and show some organisation in the presentation of material. **7-9**
- L4:** Answers will be well-focused, identifying a range of specific explanations, backed by precise evidence and demonstrating good understanding of the connections and links between events/issues. Answers will, for the most part, be well-written and organised. **10-12**

Question 1(b), Question 2(b) and Question 3(b)

- L1:** Answers 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, there may be some explicit comment with little, if any, appropriate support. Answers are likely to be generalised and assertive. 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. **0-6**
- L2:** Answers will show some understanding of the focus of the question. They will either be almost entirely descriptive with few explicit links to the question or they may contain some explicit comment with relevant but limited support. They will display limited understanding of differing historical interpretations. Answers will be coherent but weakly expressed and/or poorly structured. **7-11**
- L3:** Answers will show a developed understanding of the demands of the question. They will provide some assessment, backed by relevant and appropriately selected evidence, but they will lack depth and/or balance. There will be some understanding of varying historical interpretations. Answers will, for the most part, be clearly expressed and show some organisation in the presentation of material. **12-16**

L4: Answers will show explicit understanding of the demands of the question. They will develop a balanced argument backed by a good range of appropriately selected evidence and a good understanding of historical interpretations. Answers will, for the most part, show organisation and good skills of written communication. **17-21**

L5: Answers will be well-focused and closely argued. The arguments will be supported by precisely selected evidence leading to a relevant conclusion/judgement, incorporating well-developed understanding of historical interpretations and debate. Answers will, for the most part, be carefully organised and fluently written, using appropriate vocabulary. **22-24**

Question 1

(a) Explain why the Liberals won a landslide victory in the 1906 general election. (12 marks)

Target: AO1(a), AO1(b)

Indicative content

The focus of the answer should be on explaining the reasons for the Liberal election victory in January 1906, although credit will be given to candidates who also demonstrate understanding of the term 'landslide' and show knowledge of the scale of the Liberal victory. Candidates may refer to the popularity of Liberal support for Free Trade in providing cheap food as well as economic success. They may also mention the reunification of the Liberal Party around Free Trade in contrast to earlier divisions over Home Rule, the Boer War and leadership issues. Some may argue that the Lib-Lab Pact of 1903 was helpful though this probably benefited Labour more than the Liberals. Candidates may also refer to factors which caused the Conservatives to do badly, not just those which caused the Liberals to do well. Amongst these might be Conservative divisions over Tariff Reform; the association of tariffs with more expensive food; the Conservative record on social issues; lack of firm leadership by Balfour and Balfour's mistake in resigning his government in December 1905, giving the Liberals the chance to call an early election. Top-level responses may offer a judgement as to whether the 1906 result was due more to Conservative failings than to Liberal successes.

(b) How successful were Liberal social reforms in dealing with poverty in Britain from 1908 to 1914? (24 marks)

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

Indicative content

Although the main focus of this question is on evaluating the degree of success of the Liberal reforms, candidates may well begin by indicating the extent and causes of poverty in Britain c1900, probably by reference to the findings of Booth and Rowntree. Candidates will probably point to the Liberals successfully passing legislation to tackle poverty. Amongst examples of such measures might be the Old Age Pensions Act 1908, Trades Boards and Labour Exchanges 1909, laws to protect groups such as miners, seamen and shop-workers, as well as to the two National Insurance Acts of 1911–1912.

In assessing how successful these reforms were, candidates will need to consider criteria such as how many workers were affected by these measures, the amount of support they offered and how far they had taken effect by 1914. Candidates may argue that the payment of an old age pension from 1909 was seen as beneficial by thousands of the elderly poor. The fact that it was non-contributory, was not associated with the Poor Law, and provided a regular income for those over 70, helped many avoid real hardship and shame. By 1915 nearly a million people were receiving a pension with rather more women pensioners than men. Candidates may point to the establishment of minimum wages in the poorly-paid 'sweated trades', workers in six trades being covered by 1914. They may argue that labour exchanges brought together workers seeking employers and employers seeking workers, pointing out that 2 million workers had registered by 1914 and that nationally exchanges were finding about 3000 jobs a day. Candidates may point to the limits on hours worked underground for miners and the half-day for shop-workers. The National Insurance (Unemployment) Act covered around 2½ million workers in trades suffering regular seasonal or cyclical unemployment and provided a weekly benefit to help support the worker and his family for 15 weeks. The National Insurance (Health) Act covered far more workers – some 13 million by 1914 – and provided not only sick pay but also free medical treatment for up to 26 weeks. Women workers were also entitled to maternity benefit. Both schemes had begun to operate by 1914. These reforms provided 'safety-nets' to prevent thousands slipping into the destitution recorded by Booth and Rowntree.

Better answers, however, will question the success of these reforms by pointing out their limitations. The Old Age Pension was not universal, applying only to those with a low annual income who were of good character. Nor did it provide more than the minimum needed for sustenance. Trades Boards initially only applied to 4 trades covering about 200,000 workers, 6 by 1914, but even so, a lot of low paid occupations were not covered. There was no national minimum wage until 1999. Labour exchanges may have made the job market work more efficiently, but the State was not creating work for the unemployed. Working conditions may have been improved, but in occupations like coal mining they were still very dangerous with high levels of industrial injury and death. Neither of the National Insurance Acts was universal. The National Insurance (Unemployment) Act only covered a fraction of the total workforce and the benefits it provided were minimal. The National Insurance (Health) Act only provided treatment for the worker, not his family; it only covered workers earning below £160 per annum and 65 years of age. Many workers resented both National Insurance Acts since they were partly financed by compulsory weekly contributions out of already low wages. Moreover, the National Insurance Acts did not begin to operate until 1913 and therefore must have had only a limited effect on reducing the causes of poverty.

Probably the best answers will argue that the Liberals failed to deal with some causes of poverty altogether. Such candidates may argue that no major education or housing act was passed before 1914 and that there was a shortage of decent housing for low-paid workers, both in town and country.

Question 2

- (a) Why did Ramsay MacDonald form a National Government in August 1931? (12 marks)

Target: AO1(a), AO1(b)

Indicative content

In answering this question, candidates should focus on explaining the reasons for MacDonald's controversial decision to form a coalition government with the Conservatives and some Liberals in August 1931. Candidates will need to bring out the seriousness of the economic and financial crisis facing the second Labour government in 1931. Reference will need to be made to the gold standard, maintaining the confidence of bankers and foreign investors, the May Report and Cabinet divisions over cuts in public spending, especially cuts in unemployment benefit. An explanation of the political pressures on MacDonald in late August 1931 will need to be brought out as well as his reasons for deciding to stay on as prime minister of a coalition government despite opposition from most of the Labour movement.

- (b) How important were the policies of the National Government in bringing about economic recovery in Britain by 1939? (24 marks)

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

Indicative content

Answers should focus on the effectiveness of government measures and their importance compared to other factors. However, candidates who also query how far there was economic recovery throughout Britain by 1939 should be rewarded.

Candidates may well refer to policies which encouraged recovery, such as Britain leaving the gold standard in late 1931, lower interest rates, tariffs, schemes to encourage the movement and retraining of workers, help for the most depressed regions, public works and rearmament at the end of the 1930s. Leaving the gold standard allowed the value of the £ to fall so making exports cheaper. Tariffs seem to have protected some industries such as steel. £2 million was made available to the regions most badly affected by long-term unemployment, and local public works schemes such as road building and subsidies for the building of the *RMS Queen Mary* and *RMS Queen Elizabeth* helped recovery in some areas. Once rearmament began seriously, it boosted demand in depressed industries such as shipbuilding, iron and steel and even textiles.

However, better answers will query the effectiveness of many of these measures. Similar movements in other countries soon offset depreciation and tariffs. Government aid to the depressed areas was woefully inadequate as the Jarrow Crusaders and the hunger marchers tried to demonstrate. Public works were on an insufficient scale whilst rearmament only began to make a real impact in 1938–1939. Well-informed candidates may also argue that some government policies may have deferred recovery, for example, cuts in unemployment benefit and government salaries, and obsession with balancing the Budget, had the effect of lowering overall demand in the economy.

Really good answers will also point to other factors for which the government was not directly responsible. Amongst these might be general world recovery from about 1935, the fact that the newer manufacturing industries and the service sector were not as badly affected by the world depression as were the older 'staple' industries, the growth of consumerism encouraged by falling prices, a falling birth rate, rising real wages, advertising and the spread of hire purchase. Candidates may well refer to the growth of private house- building, the ownership of motor cars, radios and electrical goods as evidence of this consumerism. These factors operated throughout most of the 1930s and to some extent in all regions, even the most depressed.

Question 3

(a) Why was a new coalition government formed in May 1940? (12 marks)

Target: AO1(a), AO1(b)

Indicative content

Some candidates may answer this by stressing the inadequacies of the Chamberlain government and the loss of support for Neville Chamberlain personally between the autumn of 1938 and the spring of 1940. Candidates may point to unease about Munich in October 1938; growing disillusionment with Chamberlain's policy of appeasement in spring 1939 when Hitler seized the rest of Czechoslovakia; the loss of confidence in Chamberlain due to his failure to get an alliance with Soviet Russia and to foresee the Nazi-Soviet Pact. Answers will need to go on to refer to the uncertainty of the 'phoney war', the disaster of the Norwegian Campaign and his unfortunate remark about Hitler having 'missed the bus' just days before the successful German invasion of the Netherlands. By May 1940, Chamberlain no longer commanded the support of all Conservatives, whilst Labour refused to enter a war coalition under his leadership.

Candidates may stress the positive attractions of Winston Churchill as a replacement for Chamberlain in May 1940. Reference may be made to the public's belief that he had been right in his pre-war criticisms of government policy on rearmament and relations with Germany and Italy. They may point to Chamberlain having to bring him into government once war was declared and to Churchill's ability to associate himself with successes such as the Battle of the River Plate and to avoid association with disasters such as Narvik. Candidates may refer to Lord Halifax's refusal of the premiership and also to Churchill gaining the support of the Labour Party as well as dissident Conservatives. Finally, candidates might point to the serious international crisis looming for Britain in the spring of 1940 with Denmark and Norway already under Nazi control, the Wehrmacht sweeping through the Netherlands and threatening northern France, whilst Britain seemed increasingly isolated and vulnerable.

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- (b) How important to the revival of Labour Party fortunes between 1935 and 1945 was the British public's experience of the Second World War? (24 marks)

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

Indicative content

As evidence for the revival of Labour Party fortunes, candidates could refer to Labour's weakness in the 1930s, especially between 1931 and 1935, contrasted with its landslide victory at the general election of 1945. Although Labour recovered most of the votes and seats it had lost in 1931 at the 1935 general election, it was unable to win power. It did, however, continue to grow in confidence and its decision in May 1940 not to serve in a coalition under Chamberlain was crucial to the change of premier. Some candidates might suggest that had there been a general election in 1940 Labour might have won, but historical opinion is by no means certain. What is clear, however, is that opinion polls tended to favour Labour from 1942 onwards and that although the result in 1945 came as a surprise to many, perhaps it should not have done so.

Candidates then need to consider how the public's experience of war might have benefited Labour. For example, they might look at how the experience of war changed public attitudes and expectations. The war reconciled many middle as well as working-class voters to greater state intervention and control, leading to a belief that state planning might solve peacetime problems as well as wartime ones. They might argue that the war created a mood of social solidarity and a greater recognition of the defects of the pre-war economic and welfare system. It encouraged the publication of plans for future reconstruction covering housing and town planning, a free medical service, national insurance and education. Even before the war ended, important legislation such as the 1944 Education Act and the 1945 Family Allowances Act promised a better future for the masses. Candidates might argue that Labour, as a collectivist party with a firmly expressed belief in collective planning and action, was always likely to benefit from this new mood. Its 1945 election manifesto, *Let Us Face the Future*, reflected these popular beliefs and expectations.

Candidates might also point out that the war years gave the voters practical experience of what collective state action could achieve. Unemployment had virtually disappeared by the end of 1941. Legislation based welfare assistance on need rather than a means test. The state provided children with free milk from 1940 and later orange juice, cod liver oil and vitamin supplements. Free school meals and nurseries helped working wives, whilst the hospital and medical services were overhauled. A combination of full employment, rationing and progressive taxation also helped bring about a modest redistribution of income giving reality to hopes for a fairer and more just society. Many voters were determined that these benefits should become permanent and not end once the fighting was over as had happened after the Great War. Again this made voters more willing to look to Labour rather than to the Conservatives.

The war also gave the public five years' experience of Labour politicians in government. Attlee was appointed deputy prime minister with special responsibility for home affairs, Ernest Bevin was Minister of Labour, Herbert Morrison the Home Secretary. Along with Dalton, Cripps and others, candidates could argue that Labour was able to prove itself on the Home Front and wipe away any lingering memories of the debacle of 1931.

Candidates should also consider other balancing factors. For example, the new leader from 1935, Clement Attlee, though hardly inspiring, did end the pacifist foreign policy of Lansbury, expelled those sympathetic to the Communist Party and focused the party's attention on

regaining the trust of the voters. With the support of moderate trade union leaders such as Bevin and Citrine, Attlee was able to put in place the basic policies which were to win Labour power in 1945. Significantly, Labour won a dozen extra seats in by-elections in the late 1930s.

Other factors candidates should consider would include Conservative mistakes which enabled Labour to benefit at the polls from the voters' wartime experiences. Reference might be made to Churchill's lukewarm attitude to proposals for post-war reform which together with his infamous 'Gestapo' speech gave the impression that social and welfare reforms were not uppermost in his mind. They might argue that the Conservative Party machine became run-down during the war years and had not recovered its normal effectiveness by the time the election came. Candidates might point out that the Conservatives did win 10 million votes and also had ideas for welfare reform suggesting that had they been better organised Labour's victory in 1945 might not have been so decisive.

Finally, candidates might refer to electoral factors. Given that Labour had not formed a government for 14 years it was time for the political pendulum to swing in their favour. The electoral system itself seems to have favoured Labour more in 1945 and so did the decline of the Liberals which made the election in most constituencies a two-party race.