



## **General Certificate of Education**

# **AS History**

## **Unit 2: HIS2Q**

### **The USA and Vietnam, 1961–1975**

# **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](http://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)**

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**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

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**Specimen Mark Scheme****GCE AS History Unit 2: Historical Issues: Periods of Change****HIS2Q: The USA and Vietnam, 1961–1975****Question 1**

- (a) Use **Sources A** and **B** and your own knowledge.

Explain how far the views in **Source A** differ from those in **Source B** in relation to the success of the 1968 Tet Offensive. (12 marks)

*Target: AO2(a)*

- L1:** Answers will **either** briefly paraphrase/describe the content of the two sources **or** identify simple comparison(s) between the sources. Skills of written communication will be weak. **0-2**
- L2:** Responses will compare the views expressed in the two sources and identify some differences and/or similarities. There may be some limited own knowledge. Answers will be coherent but weakly expressed. **3-6**
- L3:** Responses will compare the views expressed in the two sources, identifying differences **and** similarities and using own knowledge to explain and evaluate these. Answers will, for the most part, be clearly expressed. **7-9**
- L4** Responses will make a developed comparison between the views expressed in the two sources and will apply own knowledge to evaluate and to demonstrate a good contextual understanding. Answers will, for the most part, show good skills of written communication. **10-12**

**Indicative content**

Source A makes reference to the opinion of Robert McNamara on the Tet offensive. He says there are some negatives but makes it clear that these are outweighed by the positives. therefore the Tet offensive was an overall success because the North Vietnamese were thwarted in their objectives. This represents the official view of the Johnson administration since McNamara was a government advisor. It is also the view of the military at the time. Source B concentrates on the negative view and sees Tet as a failure. Here Kennedy emphasizes the fact that the US forces and the South Vietnamese army could not prevent the Vietcong from attacking cities. Therefore completely opposing the view in Source A, although he does accept that there are doubts as to whether the Vietcong can hold on to the cities. Kennedy's view is an anti-war one.

From their own knowledge, candidates may expand on the events of Tet. The Americans were shocked that the Vietcong had the ability to hit and capture provincial capitals. Many in the USA counted Tet as a win because of the enormous losses that were inflicted on the North. Also a lot of the capitals were recaptured. Tet became a psychological defeat for Americans.

- (b) Use **Sources A, B and C** and your own knowledge.

How important was the failure to gain popular support in South Vietnam in the eventual defeat of the USA in the Vietnam War? (24 marks)

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

- L1:** Answers may be based on sources or on own knowledge alone, or they may comprise an undeveloped mixture of the two. They may 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 may be based on sources or on own knowledge alone, or they may contain a mixture of the two. They may be almost entirely descriptive with few explicit links to the focus of the question. Alternatively, 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 using evidence from **both** the sources **and** own knowledge. 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 from the sources and own knowledge, 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 from the sources and own knowledge, 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**

### Indicative content

Source A suggests that South Vietnam was a complex situation and that the Vietcong did not force a general uprising, so contradicts the question. Source B is clearly demonstrating the significance of the Vietcong that they are able to beat a much larger US-led force. Source C suggests that the Vietcong have the support of the people and the USA does not. It mentions hearts and minds.

From their own knowledge, candidates may refer in detail to the failure to win hearts and minds and how the people supported the Communists. Other reasons were the strengths of the Vietcong. Their ability to repair the Ho Chi Minh trail after it has been bombed. Also their prowess when it came to guerilla warfare and their ability to with stand great hardship. The

strength of their leaders and better tactical awareness were a contributory factor. Therefore the strengths of the Vietcong were very important to the outcome of the war in Vietnam. However, other factors, such as the Vietcong were on home territory and so used to the jungle environment whereas the Americans were away from home and not used to the terrain or climate, are considerations.

The Americans misjudged the Vietcong and their resilience and used technology inappropriately for jungle terrain. The drug use amongst American troops was not conducive to winning a war. The sub-standard performance of the American troops and their short deployments and use of raw recruits also undermined their efforts. The wrong tactics that were used on a Third World nation because the American leaders thought bombing was the answer. The support by other Communist nations for North Vietnam helped them to overcome weapon shortages. Hence there are a number of reasons for defeat.

## Question 2

- (a) Explain why the USA became involved in the defence of South Vietnam in the years 1961 to 1964. (12 marks)

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

- 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**

## Indicative content

- 1961 – Kennedy increases military aid and ‘advisers’ to Vietnam because he wants to stand firm and so by 1963 he had committed 16,000 advisers through Project Beef Up.
- Dollar aid was increased to Diem
- 1963 Strategic Hamlet programme was introduced to uproot villagers and put them into barbed wire compounds
- Late November – Diem was removed after the CIA encouraged dissident generals to overthrow Diem

- 1964 Gulf of Tonkin incident leads to the Gulf of Tonkin resolution which allows Johnson to handle the war his way. Hence the war becomes more Americanized and Johnson looks to escalate through bombing.

- (b) 'The escalation of the Vietnam War between 1964 and 1968 was due to the optimistic belief that victory was just around the corner.'  
Explain why you agree or disagree with this view. (24 marks)

*Target: AO1(a), AO1(b), AO2(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 limited part of the period 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 demands 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**

### Indicative content

Candidates should show that escalation occurred because of President Johnson's belief that the USA could win the war in Vietnam. Johnson did believe that the USA had the technology to win. He thought that Vietnam was such a backward nation that it would be relatively quick and easy. President Johnson greatly escalated the war through increased military presence after the Gulf of Tonkin resolution. The President was given wide latitude to prosecute the war as he saw fit. US troops continued to increase until they reached over half a million in 1968. To begin with, he did believe that victory was around the corner. However, this belief began to waver after Tet and the number of body bags began to rise. There were other reasons for escalation such as the credibility of President Johnson and the USA. There was his desire to avoid defeat at all costs. The anti-communist views and the Cold War context were other factors for



escalation. Public support in the early part of the war played a part in escalation as did the support of Congress. It was a popular decision to escalate and to send in the troops, especially since people thought it was going to be over quickly. Advisers were instrumental on the policies of President Johnson and the military encouraged escalation. Furthermore, Johnson had Kennedy's legacy to consider. His personality was a factor since he was macho Texan. Hence there are a range of reasons to consider.

### Question 3

- (a) Explain why, after the opening of the Paris peace talks in 1965, the Vietnam War did not come to an end until 1975. (12 marks)

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

- 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**

### Indicative content

- Candidates should be aware that the Paris peace talks began in 1968
- Kissinger was meeting privately with Le Duc Tho, the North Vietnam delegate, despite the South Vietnamese trying to stall the talks
- Nixon was using various techniques to both try to win the war and force the North to the negotiation table. This included widening the war and increased bombing campaigns in 1972. Also he tried to convince North Vietnam that he was a madman
- January 1973 a ceasefire agreement was signed and the USA promised to withdraw its troops within 60 days
- The USA pulled out its troops from Vietnam, leaving behind some advisors  
North and South Vietnam violated the cease fire and full scale war erupted  
Just before the collapse of the South Vietnamese government Americans and Vietnamese were evacuated from the Saigon embassy
- April 1975, the South Vietnamese government collapsed and the war was finally over

- (b) 'The reason why the Vietnam War lasted so long after 1968 was the deliberate deception of the American people by Nixon and Kissinger.'  
Explain why you agree or disagree with this view. (24 marks)

*Target: AO1(a), AO1(b), AO2(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 limited part of the period 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**
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- 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**

### Indicative content

- Nixon and Kissinger did indeed deceive the American people and increased bombing to Cambodia. However Nixon also reduced troop levels significantly by 1971. Madman tactics were also introduced to try to get the North to sign an agreement. Although the American people were kept in the dark, Nixon and Kissinger carried on looking for a favourable peace. The military were also insisting that the war could be won so there was a duality to the way that Nixon and Kissinger operated.
- The war lasts a long time after 1968 because of the failure of Kissinger and Nixon to secure an agreement. Jugular diplomacy failed to work i.e. pounding Hanoi into concessions, although this did bring the North Vietnamese to the negotiating table.
- Arguably Kissinger and hence Nixon knew that the North Vietnamese were aiming to take over the South the minute the USA left and they wanted to put in a settlement which would allow for a political solution that gave the South a structure to resist this.
- Kissinger and Nixon wanted the right solution that kept the USA's credibility. Nixon empowered Kissinger to make concessions when he thought it would impress allies of the USA.

- The North Vietnamese knew they were in a strong position because of the support they had from China and Soviet Union. Also they were aware of the anti-war movement in the USA and so could afford to delay, i.e. time was on their side and wait for the right settlement because they were not worried about their own body bag count the way the USA was. Also they did not have an anti war movement to contend with. Time also meant they could regroup i.e. negotiation was a tactic to win the war.
- South Vietnamese delegation deliberately stalled the negotiations because they knew that if the USA pulled out they would not be able to stand alone against North Vietnam.
- The main stumbling block to peace was that the South wanted to maintain their own non-Communist government and the North were equally determined to unite under one Communist rule. These were irreconcilable differences. Therefore the peace accords of 1973 did not bring peace to Vietnam.