



General Certificate of Education

A2 History 2041

Unit 3: HIS3M

The Making of Modern Britain, 1951–2007

Mark Scheme

Specimen mark scheme for examinations in June 2010 onwards
This mark scheme uses the [new numbering system](#)

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 operational exams.

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

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Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

Generic Introduction for A2

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

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

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

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

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

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

CRITERIA FOR MARKING GCE HISTORY:

A2 EXAMINATION PAPERS

General Guidance for Examiners (to accompany Level Descriptors)

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

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

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

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

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

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

Criteria for deciding marks within a level:

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

Specimen Mark Scheme for examinations in June 2010 onwards

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

HIS3M: The Making of Modern Britain, 1951–2007

Question 1

- 01** To what extent can the period of Conservative dominance between 1951 and 1964 be viewed as ‘Thirteen Wasted Years’? (45 marks)

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

Generic Mark Scheme for essays at A2

- L1:** Answers will display a limited understanding of the demands of the question. They may **either** contain some descriptive material which is only loosely linked to the focus of the question **or** they may address only a part of the question. Alternatively, they may contain some explicit comment but will make few, if any, synoptic links and will have limited accurate and relevant historical support. There will be little, if any, awareness of differing historical interpretations. The response will be limited in development and skills of written communication will be weak. **0-6**
- L2:** Answers will show some understanding of the demands of the question. They will **either** be primarily descriptive with few explicit links to the question **or** they may contain explicit comment but show limited relevant factual support. They will display limited understanding of differing historical interpretations. Historical debate may be described rather than used to illustrate an argument and any synoptic links will be undeveloped. Answers will be coherent but weakly expressed and/or poorly structured. **7-15**
- L3:** Answers will show a good understanding of the demands of the question. They will provide some assessment, backed by relevant and appropriately selected evidence, which may, however, lack depth. There will be some synoptic links made between the ideas, arguments and information included although these may not be highly developed. There will be some understanding of varying historical interpretations. Answers will be clearly expressed and show reasonable organisation in the presentation of material. **16-25**
- L4:** Answers will show a very good understanding of the demands of the question. There will be synoptic links made between the ideas, arguments and information included showing an overall historical understanding. There will be a good understanding and use of differing historical interpretations and debate and the answer will show judgement through sustained argument backed by a carefully selected range of precise evidence. Answers will be well-organised and display good skills of written communication. **26-37**
- L5:** Answers will show a full understanding of the demands of the question. The ideas, arguments and information included will be wide-ranging, carefully chosen and closely interwoven to produce a sustained and convincing answer with a high level of synopticity. Conceptual depth, independent judgement and a mature historical understanding, informed by a well-developed understanding of historical interpretations and debate, will be displayed. Answers will be very well-structured and fluently written. **38-45**

Indicative content

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

Candidates should be aware that the Labour Party's election campaign in 1964, under the theme 'Thirteen Wasted Years', was basically a condemnation of the Conservatives' record in general, and particularly the 'stop-go' policies which highlighted their inability to produce sustained growth. Since 1964 it has become almost the conventional wisdom that affluence was temporary and built on fortuitous circumstances and, that from 1955, Britain was bedevilled by a series of sterling crises which held back the economy. Clearly the success of the Conservative administration in the 1950s rested upon the material conditions of the period.

Candidates may refer to some of the following material in support of the premise of 'Wasted Years':

- The 1950s in hindsight was a period of missed opportunities and growth was sluggish compared with Britain's competitors
- Britain lacked any real coherent strategy over her place in the world. Had she missed the boat over Europe? What would be the effects of decolonization, the end of Empire and an increase in immigration in society?
- There was a lack of long-term planning by all four Conservative Prime Ministers
- Expectations of 'continuous affluence' were too great; hence public disillusionment
- The early 1960s produced a series of deflationary policies which resulted in poor by-election and local election results
- The Conservatives had not halted the relative economic decline of Britain which became more apparent in the early 1960s
- 'Short-termism' by a variety of Conservative chancellors was designed to win elections rather than 'modernise' British society and the economy
- Was Britain actually in decline before the 1950s and, if so, how much does this alter any judgement of 1951–1964?
- Britain's poor educational performance meant that fewer students stayed on in higher education compared to abroad

Candidates may use the following material to argue against the premise:

- The Conservatives did not undo Attlee's legacy; in fact 'Butskellism' retained many of the key features such as the Welfare State and the mixed economy
- With the Labour Party in such disarray throughout much of this period, what would its performance have been like if in government?
- Economic growth did increase during these years with a 2%–3% a year increase as opposed to the pre-war period
- Inflation was at 3% and unemployment was below 2% for most of the period
- Investment rose by 26%
- There was a rise in affluence for the bulk of the population, mirrored by Macmillan's 'you've never had it so good'
- Home ownership went from 25% to 44%; television ownership – 91% in 1964 compared to 4% in 1950; car ownership – from 2million to 8 million. This supports Blake's contention that this was part of a 'Golden Age'

Candidates may conclude that 'it was neither a period of continuous and uninterrupted expansion as the Conservatives would have us believe, nor the Thirteen Wasted Years of Labour mythology' (Bogdanor and Skidelsky). Candidates may wish to differentiate certain years within the timeframe to highlight progress or failure.

Question 2

02 To what extent was Britain in economic decline in the years 1951 to 2007? (45 marks)

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

Generic Mark Scheme for essays at A2

- L1:** Answers will display a limited understanding of the demands of the question. They may **either** contain some descriptive material which is only loosely linked to the focus of the question **or** they may address only a part of the question. Alternatively, they may contain some explicit comment but will make few, if any, synoptic links and will have limited accurate and relevant historical support. There will be little, if any, awareness of differing historical interpretations. The response will be limited in development and skills of written communication will be weak. **0-6**
- L2:** Answers will show some understanding of the demands of the question. They will **either** be primarily descriptive with few explicit links to the question **or** they may contain explicit comment but show limited relevant factual support. They will display limited understanding of differing historical interpretations. Historical debate may be described rather than used to illustrate an argument and any synoptic links will be undeveloped. Answers will be coherent but weakly expressed and/or poorly structured. **7-15**
- L3:** Answers will show a good understanding of the demands of the question. They will provide some assessment, backed by relevant and appropriately selected evidence, which may, however, lack depth. There will be some synoptic links made between the ideas, arguments and information included although these may not be highly developed. There will be some understanding of varying historical interpretations. Answers will be clearly expressed and show reasonable organisation in the presentation of material. **16-25**
- L4:** Answers will show a very good understanding of the demands of the question. There will be synoptic links made between the ideas, arguments and information included showing an overall historical understanding. There will be a good understanding and use of differing historical interpretations and debate and the answer will show judgement through sustained argument backed by a carefully selected range of precise evidence. Answers will be well-organised and display good skills of written communication. **26-37**
- L5:** Answers will show a full understanding of the demands of the question. The ideas, arguments and information included will be wide-ranging, carefully chosen and closely interwoven to produce a sustained and convincing answer with a high level of synopticity. Conceptual depth, independent judgement and a mature historical understanding, informed by a well-developed understanding of historical interpretations and debate, will be displayed. Answers will be very well-structured and fluently written. **38-45**
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Indicative content

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

Candidates will need to undertake an assessment of the condition of the British economy between 1951 and 2007 and can adopt a variety of approaches, which highlight divergent interpretations.

They may also argue that there is always difficulty in arriving at an objective judgement as it depends on a range of issues, such as:

- Complexity of factors
- What criteria should be used?
- Should the economic record be measured against its predecessors? Successors? Other industrial countries?

In doing so, candidates may agree with Paul Johnson's analysis that in this period there was 'simultaneous improvement and decline'. This suggests that, whilst Britain by 2007 had become a much wealthier, more comfortable place to live, it doesn't obscure the fact that there has been 'relative' decline since 1951. In 2007 Britain had low unemployment compared to Europe and low stable inflation. Therefore, does this mean that the policies of Thatcher, Major and Blair had laid new foundations for sustainable, future growth? Or, with the huge loss in manufacturing and the shift to a tertiary or service base, has Britain simply continued to manage her relative decline?

Candidates may refer to some of the following material:

- Economic assessments are difficult as they are usually linked to political perspectives, e.g. Keynesianism or Thatcherism
- Thatcherites would view the period 1951–1979 as a period of excessive state spending, with a lack of free enterprise and competition, and a failure to deal with trade unions. Hence 'Thatcher as saviour' model
- Writers like Hobsbawm view 1979 very differently – Thatcher destroyed the post-war consensus (which had delivered a 'Golden Age' between 1951–1973) and with her confrontational politics destroyed British industry. The result being 'private affluence and public squalor'
- The impact of joining the EEC in 1973. Supporters of Europe suggest that Britain suffered badly for failing to join at the start. Others show that entry coincided with the oil-price crisis and recession. Eurosceptics of course simply believe that a collectivist Europe has damaged Britain's economic position
- How important was the debt incurred in the Second World War to the British economy?
- How great was the impact of trying to be a world power after 1951?
- Should defence spending have been cut, resulting in greater investment in the overall economy?
- How damaging were the years 1951–1973 in terms of 'lost opportunities'? Were the underlying weaknesses of the British economy never really tackled? Low growth rates compared to foreign competitors, the failure to re-structure industry post-1945 etc
- How damaging was the 1973 oil-price crisis and did it affect Britain more than other countries?
- How beneficial was the post-war boom, 1951–1973?

- How significant was Britain's increased trade with Europe between 1973 and 1993? It rose from 30% to 50%
- The impact of North Sea oil
- Thatcherite policies – did they kill or cure industry?
- Were the years 1951–1997 a series of 'booms' and 'busts'?

Candidates may differentiate periods of success and failure and in coming to a conclusion may highlight three main viewpoints, the 'Golden Age' view, the Thatcherite view or the balanced view.

The final view would suggest that on the one hand post-war recovery was relatively successful, but on the other hand there was a failure in terms of competition and investment.

Question 3

- 03** 'The industrial disputes of the 1980s were primarily the result of Mrs Thatcher's desire to destroy the power of the trade unions.'
Assess the validity of this verdict. (45 marks)

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

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The question is basically linked to the bigger question confronting the Conservatives on returning to power in 1979 – law and order and ‘Who Governs Britain?’ Whilst it is quite clear that one of Margaret Thatcher’s key tenets was to ‘roll back socialism’ – she said so herself on numerous occasions – and in doing so curb the power of the trade unions, candidates need to fully assess the origins of the industrial disputes of the 1980s. The following points are very important:

- Was it purely a personal agenda of Margaret Thatcher to destroy the unions, or was it based on the advice of colleagues such as Keith Joseph?
- Did she see the defeat of trade unions as essential to develop her other agendas, such as privatisation, centralisation of local government and other major changes in Education and Health?
- Was she responding to the public’s general election mandate of 1979 to sort out the situation left by Labour? There was a widespread perception that union power needed to be restricted
- Was it the nature of Thatcherism? Instead of ‘conserving’ like previous Conservative prime ministers, Margaret Thatcher embarked on a radical agenda. Hence industrial disputes were inevitable
- Was it part of the New Right agenda, stemming from the early 1970s? Margaret Thatcher was a supporter of the New Right thinking which was developing in the Conservative Party
- Was it a product of the challenge to the post-war consensus by the New Right, who wanted no return to domestic appeasement?
- Grass roots Conservatives resented the u-turns of the early 1970s under Heath and wanted to see the unions, and particularly the miners, put in their place
- Were the disputes due to the industrial militancy of the 1970s and the rising levels of social discontent?
- Were trade union leaders too assertive and politicised by the events of the late 1970s? Were they using their organisations to pursue their own political ends?

Debate needs to centre particularly around whether Margaret Thatcher actually ‘planned’ industrial disputes. Some suggest she did not pre-meditate them. Rather they appear to be a series of responses that evolved into a pragmatic reaction to circumstance over time. Certainly her first ministry began with caution. Others say she deliberately stoked up unemployment between 1979 and 1981 to over 3 million in order to suppress the power of the trade unions. Clearly the enormous 144-seat majority of 1983 allowed Thatcher the freedom and dominance to enact her policy programmes.

Candidates need to try and examine several examples, particularly the following:

- The ramifications of the 1980 and 1982 Employment Acts which strengthened the government’s position against the unions
- The GCHQ base at Cheltenham where union membership was declared illegal
- The miners’ strike of 1984–1985 which was described by Kim Howells as the ‘last great industrial dispute’
- The press dispute with Rupert Murdoch at Wapping

In all 4 cases the unions were beaten and suffered heavy defeats. Margaret Thatcher's aim to confront the unions had been successful in the short run. The power of the unions was drastically reduced, the number of working days lost to strikes declined steeply and union membership dropped. The premise of the question will undoubtedly elicit trenchant responses, but candidates should be wary of producing highly opinionated or unbalanced answers. It is important for candidates to offer a good range of evidence when offering a response to the question.