



**General Certificate of Education  
June 2010**

**A2 History 2041**

**HIS3E**

**Unit 3E**

**France and the Enlightenment:**

**Absolutism Under Threat, 1743–1789**

**Final**

***Mark Scheme***

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

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

Further copies of this Mark Scheme are available to download from the AQA Website: [www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk)

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## 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)**

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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:

- 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

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June 2010

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

**HIS3E: France and Enlightenment: Absolutism Under Threat, 1743–1789**

**Question 1**

- 01** 'Instability in France in the years 1743 to 1774 was the result of Louis XV's weaknesses as a monarch.'  
How valid is this view? (45 marks)

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

**Standard Mark Scheme for Essays at A2**

- Nothing written worthy of credit. **0**
- 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. **1-6**
- 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**
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**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.**

Very good responses may make some attempt to define what instability there was during this period. Such definitions may include one or more of the following:

- the failure to alleviate the financial crisis and to implement financial reform
- the failure to prevent the rise of factionalism at court
- the failure to prevent parlement from establishing a greater constitutional role and presence within the rising public sphere
- the failure to support reform, and especially those of Maupeou
- the failure to control the rise of seditious literature, especially in relation to the Brittany Affair and the Pacte de Famine.

Whilst some candidates may seek to challenge the premise of the question, there should remain a clear focus on determining the role of monarchy in preventing stability.

### Arguments supporting the weakness of Louis XV:

Louis XV failed to command respect from the populace. This is clearly illustrated by the Pacte de Famine and the Affair of the Innocents. Such a failure to command the public sphere was becoming of much greater relevance as concepts such as Divine Right declined. Whilst Louis XV certainly attempted to assert his authority and to push through the reforms thought necessary for the stability of France, the rare occasions on which this occurred – such as the Flagellation Speech- lacked the drive to see to completion. The rarity of the Maupeou Revolution is more evidence of the dominance of ministerial faction rather than a concerted attempt by the king himself to reassert stability.

### Arguments counter to the concept of weakness:

Whilst Louis XV allowed ministers to make many decisions, and this may be a feature of his secluded upbringing, it should not be forgotten that Louis XV relied as much on trusted advisors as previous monarchs. It was the rise of faction led by the ambitious that accounted for increased instability. Such factionalism certainly fed on a lack of central authority, but was also a consequence of a range of other factors. Parlement had long been agitating for a greater constitutional role, and this may indeed be considered a long-term consequence of the return of their rights of pre-registration remonstrance. In addition, to blame Louis XV for financial crisis – possibly the driver behind all other crises- is short-sighted. Whilst he was undoubtedly responsible for an increase in debt during war, he can not solely be blamed for the failure to resolve the fundamental problems of privilege.

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**Question 2**

- 02** How far was the failure to solve the financial problems of the monarchy in the years 1774 to 1789 due to the Paris Parlement? (45 marks)

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

**Standard Mark Scheme for Essays at A2**

- Nothing written worthy of credit. **0**
- 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. **1-6**
- 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**
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- 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.**

Whilst very good responses may consider a good range of factors causing the financial problems for monarchy, there should be a firm focus on the role of parlement and some attempt to define the nature of the problems themselves. Factors may include the following:

- Parlement clearly used the financial crisis as a lever with which to assert a greater constitutional role. A less critical view might consider the magistrates as sincerely attempting to protect what they considered to be the fundamental rights of France, although an equally straightforward view might include the financial self-interest of privileged magistrates. The refusal to support a whole series of reforms from successive Controller generals such as Turgot, Necker, Calonne and Brienne certainly added to the financial crisis.

Factors other than Parlement may include:

- the Controller Generals themselves, whilst attempting reform, often did so with a mix of motives including those of self interest. The publication of the Compte Rendu is a particular example of a Controller General using the new public sphere as a means to preserve his own ministerial position and wider reputation, rather than the interests perhaps of France. The eventual recalling of Necker may be used to illustrate the exasperation of government to find a solution to the financial crisis
- the unwillingness of the privileged to contemplate financial reform went far beyond the Palais Royal, and the Compte Rendu rapidly became a means for the self-interested to oppose arguments detailing the pressing nature of the financial crisis
- it might be argued that by 1774, the financial crisis was beyond an easy resolution, regardless of the subsequent actions of ministers and crown
- French involvement in the American War of Independence had little to do with the actions of Parlement, yet it may reasonably be argued to have been the final stage in the financial bankruptcy of France
- some candidates may argue that the popular imagery of royal excess, and especially that of Marie Antoinette, did much harm to any attempts to win the argument for financial reform within the burgeoning public sphere
- the unfortunate series of short-term economic events in the immediate pre-revolution certainly heightened the sense of crisis, yet it is doubtful if these alone contributed much to a failure to solve the underlying problems.

**Question 3**

- 03** To what extent were the attempts at reform in France in the years 1743 to 1789 due to the ideas of the Enlightenment? (45 marks)

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

**Standard Mark Scheme for Essays at A2**

- Nothing written worthy of credit. **0**
- 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. **1-6**
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## Indicative content

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There should be a clear focus on the main ideas of the Enlightenment and a clear judgement developed about the extent to which these ideas were relevant to domestic French history across the period indicated. Higher level answers might challenge the notion of there ever being a corpus of agreed enlightenment thought; thus highlighting the conflicting views of the key philosophes. In addition, some candidates might even develop the idea that these ideas became more of an excuse to serve existing factional interests and rarely constituted a major reason for reform.

### Role of the Enlightenment:

- the increased use of what might be considered enlightened terminology, such as ‘nation’ in the preamble to royal edicts and also parliamentary remonstrances might well be used as evidence of the role of the enlightenment. The very fact that remonstrances were published via the censorship exempt *memoire judiciaires* from the 1750s onwards does tend to indicate a move away from the assumptions of divine right kingship and the rise of a new, enlightened public sphere
- the efforts of the Parlements to carve a more prominent constitutional role might be ascribed to the ideas of Montesqui and the ‘Spirit of the Laws’. If Parlement might be considered an agent for change, rather than a force of conservatism, then its objection to the use of despotic royal power, and especially the apparently arbitrary sacking of magistrates, for example in the Brittany affair, might be considered motivated by the new ideas of the century
- the area in which enlightened ideas had the greatest impact was probably financial. The physiocratic ideas of Controller-Generals, such as Turgot, were enacted although candidates might argue their lack of success was more due to other factors such as factionalism that remained a greater reason for reform.

### Role of other factors:

- unlike continental neighbours, there was little attempt to link the ideas of the enlightenment to the pressure for reform. A major reason for reform was undoubtedly the worsening financial situation
- the role of factionalism cannot be dismissed. Pompadour, whilst attracted to enlightened ideas, was more concerned by action against the Devot faction. This was especially true in the debate over Machault’s taxation. The use by the government of Voltaire as a pamphleteer reveals more about the cynical use of enlightened ideology
- the pressure from Parlements to carve a greater constitutional role might be considered a motive for reform entirely divorced from concepts of enlightenment
- many candidates might identify the ambitions of individual ministers, for example Maupeou, as the key reason for the major reforms for example those of the Triumvirate.