



Your Guide to  
Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar in  
**Edexcel GCSE History A:  
The Making of the Modern World**



# Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG) in GCSE History A

## Why has SPaG been introduced?

In 2011, the Department for Education announced that SPaG would be introduced into the assessment of four GCSE qualifications: English Literature, History, Geography and Religious Studies. For each of these qualifications, 5% of the total marks must be allocated to the assessment of students' spelling, punctuation and grammar.

## How has SPaG been applied?

In Edexcel's GCSE History A, SPaG marks have been added to Units 2 and 3 only. A greater proportion of the marks has been added to Unit 2 as this is the depth study whereby candidates are writing more extensively. The marks have been added to the higher tariff questions at the end of the papers where students have a greater opportunity to demonstrate their skills at extended writing. There are no additional marks for SPaG in the controlled assessment unit.

The allocation of marks to units is as follows:

- Unit 2 Depth Study Question 2a) or 2b): 3 marks
- Unit 2 Depth Study Question 3a) or 3b): 4 marks
- Unit 3 Source Enquiry Question 5: 4 marks

This now means that the new totals are:

- Unit 2 Depth Study: 57 marks - 50 RAW marks plus 7 marks for SPaG
- Unit 3 Source Enquiry: 54 marks – 50 RAW marks plus 4 marks for SPaG

Marks for Quality of Written Communication (QWC) remain unchanged throughout the GCSE History A qualification. Many of the questions that we have applied SPaG marks to are the questions for which QWC is already assessed.

## When is the first assessment of SPaG?

SPaG will first be assessed in GCSE History in January 2013. Sample questions and mark schemes are available in this guide and further exemplification materials will be added to the website [www.edexcel.com/history](http://www.edexcel.com/history) later this year.

## How will SPaG be made clear on the exam paper?

There will be an instruction for students before any question that has SPaG marks available stating that SPaG will be assessed in that question. Beneath the question, we will indicate how many marks are available for SPaG for that question. There are examples of how questions will be presented on pages 3–5 of this guide.



# Sample questions and mark schemes

## Sample exam question for Unit 2, question 2

**Answer EITHER Question 2(a) OR 2(b).**

**Spelling, punctuation and grammar will be assessed in this question.**

**EITHER**

2 (a) Explain how the Nazi Party developed in the years 1920–28. (8)

**OR**

2 (b) Explain how the position of women in Germany changed in the years 1933–39. (8)

**Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ~~☒~~ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.**

Chosen Question Number: **Question 2(a)**  **Question 2(b)**

**(Total for spelling, punctuation and grammar = 3 marks)**

**(Total for Question 2 = 11 marks)**

## Sample mark scheme for Unit 2, question 2

		0 marks	Errors severely hinder the meaning of the response or candidates do not spell, punctuate or use the rules of grammar within the context of the demands of the question.
<b>Threshold performance</b>	Level 1	1 mark	Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with reasonable accuracy in the context of the demands of the question. Any errors do not hinder meaning in the response. Where required, they use a limited range of specialist terms appropriately.
<b>Intermediate performance</b>	Level 2	2 marks	Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with considerable accuracy and general control of meaning in the context of the demands of the question. Where required, they use a good range of specialist terms with facility.
<b>High performance</b>	Level 3	3 marks	Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with consistent accuracy and effective control of meaning in the context of the demands of the question. Where required, they use a wide range of specialist terms adeptly and with precision.

## Sample exam question for Unit 2, question 3

Answer EITHER Question 3(a) OR 3(b).

Spelling, punctuation and grammar will be assessed in this question.

**EITHER**

\*3 (a) Was the use of propaganda the main reason Hitler was able to establish a dictatorship of the Nazi Party in the years 1935–39? Explain your answer.

(16)

You may use the following in your answer and any other information of your own.

- The use of propaganda
- The use of censorship
- The police state
- Persecution of the churches

**OR**

\*3 (b) Were attacks on Jewish businesses the worst effects of Nazi persecution of the Jews in the years 1933–39? Explain your answer.

(16)

You may use the following in your answer and any other information of your own.

- Attacks on Jewish businesses
- Education
- 1935 Nuremberg Laws
- 1938 Kristallnacht

(Total for spelling, punctuation and grammar = 4 marks)

(Total for Question 3 = 20 marks)

## Sample mark scheme for Unit 2, question 3

		0 marks	Errors severely hinder the meaning of the response or candidates do not spell, punctuate or use the rules of grammar within the context of the demands of the question.
Threshold performance	Level 1	1 mark	Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with reasonable accuracy in the context of the demands of the question. Any errors do not hinder meaning in the response. Where required, they use a limited range of specialist terms appropriately.
Intermediate performance	Level 2	2-3 marks	Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with considerable accuracy and general control of meaning in the context of the demands of the question. Where required, they use a good range of specialist terms with facility.
High performance	Level 3	4 marks	Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with consistent accuracy and effective control of meaning in the context of the demands of the question. Where required, they use a wide range of specialist terms adeptly and with precision.

## Sample exam question for Unit 3, question 5

**\*5 Study all the sources (A to F) and use your own knowledge.**

**Spelling, punctuation and grammar will be assessed in this question.**

'The Montgomery Bus Boycott was the main reason for progress in civil rights for black Americans in the years 1945-60'.

How far do the **sources** in this paper support this statement? Use details from the sources and your own knowledge to explain your answer.

(16)

(Total for spelling, punctuation and grammar = 4 marks)

(Total for Question 5 = 20 marks)

**TOTAL FOR PAPER = 54 MARKS**

## Sample mark scheme for Unit 3, question 5

		0 marks	Errors severely hinder the meaning of the response or candidates do not spell, punctuate or use the rules of grammar within the context of the demands of the question.
Threshold performance	Level 1	1 mark	Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with reasonable accuracy in the context of the demands of the question. Any errors do not hinder meaning in the response. Where required, they use a limited range of specialist terms appropriately.
Intermediate performance	Level 2	2-3 marks	Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with considerable accuracy and general control of meaning in the context of the demands of the question. Where required, they use a good range of specialist terms with facility.
High performance	Level 3	4 marks	Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with consistent accuracy and effective control of meaning in the context of the demands of the question. Where required, they use a wide range of specialist terms adeptly and with precision.

# Teaching and learning advice

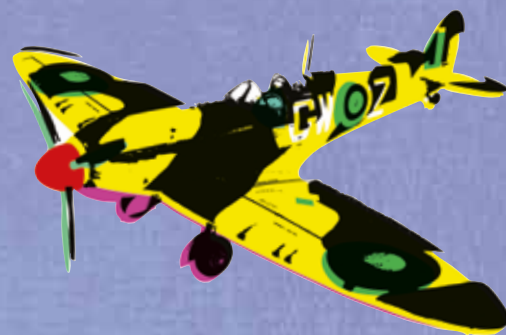
Teachers and candidates should note that SPaG is essentially made up of two strands:

## a) Spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar

It is likely that many schools will have whole-school policies on literacy and on the marking of students' work for SPaG. Students' levels of ability in SPaG are likely to vary significantly from school to school and some teachers may also find that EMAS and SEN staff have resources and strategies to help certain students.

One aspect of grammar that examiners often comment on is the frequent use of 'would of' and 'should of'. There are also occasional scripts with use of text messaging language and students should be made aware of the need to use formal language in examinations. Where appropriate, this could form a useful focus for starter or plenary sessions in lessons.

Across all units there are frequently misspellings of key terms, such as 'government', 'parliament', 'reliability' and 'biased'. A focus on commonly used words will benefit the assessment of some students' spelling. Straightforward activities for students with less developed literacy could also include the use of anagrams or the deliberate misspelling of words which the student then corrects.



## b) Specialist vocabulary

There are obvious key terms for each of the examination units. Teachers might like to draw up a glossary of key terms for students or use those that are a feature of many textbooks. Where appropriate, this could form a useful focus for starter or plenary sessions in lessons.

One straightforward activity could involve students orally explaining key vocabulary without using the term whilst other students have to correctly write down the word. Common misspellings of specialist vocabulary often include 'hypainflation', 'reperations', 'democrecy', 'daytante', 'properganda', 'sufrage', 'navel' and 'artillary'.

Teachers and students should also note that using specialist vocabulary often saves candidates valuable time during the examination as well as demonstrating historical understanding.

Note: Teachers and students should note that it is entirely possible that some candidates may achieve a Level 4 mark for their main response, yet only achieve Level 1 or below for SPaG. Similarly, a candidate marked at Level 1 for their main response could still gain full marks for SPaG.

# Frequently Asked Questions

**Why has the DfE decided that spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) are only to be assessed in English Literature, History, Geography and Religious Studies?**

These four subjects have large entries and contain questions that require extended answers. This enables a learner to be assessed on these skills without the assessment of these skills overshadowing their subject knowledge.

**How will SPaG be implemented for GCSEs in English Literature, History, Geography and Religious Studies?**

The awarding of additional marks for SPaG will affect some externally assessed units taken from January 2013. The additional marks for SPaG will be worth 5% of the total marks for the qualification.

**How will question papers indicate to candidates which questions will involve the assessment of accurate SPaG?**

There will be instructions above the relevant questions on the papers indicating to students that their spelling, punctuation and grammar will be assessed in that question. They will also be able to see the number of marks available for SPaG for that question.

**Why is a weighting of 5% for SPaG considered appropriate?**

A weighting of 5% is considered appropriate as it signifies the importance of these skills but does not assign them so much value that they overshadow subject knowledge.

**Will QWC continue to be assessed in GCSE History?**

Yes, the assessment of QWC (Quality of Written Communication) in the GCSE History qualification remains unchanged.

**Will the new requirements for SPaG apply to candidates with special educational needs, dyslexia, or disabilities such as a visual or hearing impairment?**

The new requirements will apply to all candidates. Access Arrangements to allow such candidates appropriate opportunities to demonstrate their abilities are administered by the Joint Council for Qualifications.

Further details can be obtained from the JCQ website: [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk)

**Will there be any specific accommodation arrangements put in place for EAL learners in relation to SPaG requirements?**

No. Learners who speak English as an Additional Language will not be offered additional accommodation arrangements beyond those administered by the Joint Council for Qualifications.

**Can students get marks for SPaG if they get 0 marks for their response?**

No. If a response does not answer the question and therefore scores zero for the content of the question, students cannot be awarded any marks for SPaG, as their response is not in 'the context of the demands of the question' as described in the SPaG marking criteria.

Further frequently asked questions will be added to the website [www.edexcel.com/history](http://www.edexcel.com/history)

# Edexcel History

Your support directory

## Contact your History Subject Advisor

Whatever your query – whether it is about the specification, schemes of work or questions about assessment our **History Subject Advisor** and his team are happy to help.

The **Subject Advisor service** is led by **Mark Battye**. The service will help you to solve queries relating to history and share ideas with other history teachers. You can also provide us with feedback as to how we can improve our qualifications, our support and our services.

Mark and his team can be contacted by email or by phone 8am-6pm, Monday-Friday.

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## Published Resources

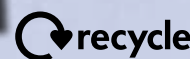
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