



AS HISTORY 7041/1G

Challenge and transformation: Britain, c1851–1964

Component 1G Victorian and Edwardian Britain, c1851–1914

Mark scheme

June 2025

Version: 1.0 Final



Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' 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.

No student should be disadvantaged on the basis of their gender identity and/or how they refer to the gender identity of others in their exam responses.

A consistent use of 'they/them' as a singular and pronouns beyond 'she/her' or 'he/him' will be credited in exam responses in line with existing mark scheme criteria.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from [aqa.org.uk](https://www.aqa.org.uk)

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Level of response marking instructions

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the average performance for the level. There are marks in each level.

Before you apply the mark scheme to a student's answer read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. You can then apply the mark scheme.

Step 1 Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level. The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity, you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level, you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, ie if the response is predominantly Level 3 with a small amount of Level 4 material it would be placed in Level 3 but be awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the Level 4 content.

Step 2 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help. There will be an answer in the standardising materials which will correspond with each level of the mark scheme. This answer will have been awarded a mark by the Lead Examiner. You can compare the student's answer with the example to determine if it is the same standard, better or worse than the example. You can then use this to allocate a mark for the answer based on the Lead Examiner's mark on the example.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other valid points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the Indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.

Section A

- 0 1** With reference to these extracts and your understanding of the historical context, which of these two extracts provides the more convincing interpretation of Gladstone's attempts to improve Anglo-Irish relations in the years 1868 to 1881?

[25 marks]*Target: AO3*

Analyse and evaluate, in relation to the historical context, different ways in which aspects of the past have been interpreted.

Generic Mark Scheme

- L5:** Answers will display a good understanding of the interpretations given in the extracts. They will evaluate the extracts thoroughly in order to provide a well-substantiated judgement on which offers the more convincing interpretation. The response demonstrates a very good understanding of context. **21–25**
- L4:** Answers will display a good understanding of the interpretations given in the extracts. There will be sufficient comment to provide a supported conclusion as to which offers the more convincing interpretation. However, not all comments will be well-substantiated, and judgements may be limited. The response demonstrates a good understanding of context. **16–20**
- L3:** The answer will show a reasonable understanding of the interpretations given in the extracts. Comments as to which offers the more convincing interpretation will be partial and/or thinly supported. The response demonstrates an understanding of context. **11–15**
- L2:** The answer will show some partial understanding of the interpretations given in the extracts. There will be some undeveloped comment in relation to the question. The response demonstrates some understanding of context. **6–10**
- L1:** The answer will show a little understanding of the interpretations given in the extracts. There will be only unsupported, vague or generalist comment in relation to the question. The response demonstrates limited understanding of context. **1–5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and students 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.

Students must assess the extent to which the interpretations are convincing by drawing on contextual knowledge to corroborate and challenge the interpretations/arguments/views.

In their identification of the argument in Extract A, students may refer to the following:

- the main argument of the extract is that Gladstone embarked on a programme of constructive reform which led to a new harmony between England and Ireland
- Gladstone's Irish legislation was a new departure and a fresh way of thinking
- the 1881 Land Act was effective in meeting the demands of Irish tenants.

In their assessment of the extent to which the arguments are convincing, students may refer to the following:

- Gladstone's approach to Anglo-Irish relations was certainly new and he had openly set himself the goal of 'pacifying Ireland'. The disestablishment of the Church of Ireland was an important symbolic step and broke new ground in removing the inappropriate privilege of the Anglican Church in Ireland
- Gladstone's first Land Act in 1870 had introduced some important principles of fair rent, fixity of tenure and free sale. These principles were made more enforceable and practical by the 1881 Land Act, meeting many of the demands made by Irish tenants for many decades
- in opposition to the extract, it could be argued that the impression given of a 'new harmony' between England and Ireland is rather optimistic. The 1870 Land Act proved hard to enforce in the courts and the 1870s witnessed a significant increase in land agitation and violence. Although the 1881 Act was an improvement, the accompanying Coercion Act enflamed nationalist sentiment in Ireland, and together the 1881 Acts did little to quell the growing calls for Home Rule.

In their identification of the argument in Extract B, students may refer to the following:

- the main argument of the extract is that Gladstone's attempts to improve Anglo-Irish relations in this period satisfied no-one
- the 1870 Land Act was a disappointment and the 1870s witnessed new levels of confrontation between Irish tenants and their landlords or agents
- the 1881 Land Act was not accepted as sufficient by Parnell and his Irish nationalist supporters.

In their assessment of the extent to which the arguments are convincing, students may refer to the following:

- the 1870 Land Act failed to define what was meant by 'fair rent' and the cost of buying land was far too high for most tenants to contemplate. Therefore, the act had a very limited impact on the ground in Ireland
- by 1881, Parnell was determined to push for Home Rule rather than just accept land reform. He was now both leader of the Irish Nationalist Party as well as the Land League, and he felt strong enough to denounce the 1881 Land Act as insufficient and demand Home Rule
- in opposition to the extract, it could be argued that it is overly critical of Gladstone's efforts to improve Anglo-Irish relations in this period. Gladstone had to balance the polarised demands of Irish tenants and English landlords. In the context of the times, his land acts were a significant and novel attempt to redress this balance more in favour of the Irish.

In arriving at a judgement as to which extract provides the more convincing interpretation, students might conclude that he clearly pursued a proactive approach to resolving issues within Ireland, which was markedly different from previous British governments, which is therefore worthy of praise as indicated in Extract A. However, the practical impact of his policies on the ground in Ireland was limited due to the opposition of Anglo-Irish landowners and the need not to be seen to be giving in to violent protest. Therefore, the argument of Extract B can also be supported. Overall, by 1881, the cause of Home Rule was gaining momentum, perhaps indicating that Gladstone had ultimately failed in significantly improving Anglo-Irish relations.

Section B

- 0 2** 'In the years 1886 to 1905, the Conservatives did little to improve the quality of life of the working classes.'

Explain why you agree or disagree with this view.

[25 marks]

Target: AO1

Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.

Generic Mark Scheme

- L5:** Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment leading to substantiated judgement. **21–25**
- L4:** Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be analytical comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance. However, there may be some generalisation and judgements will be limited and only partially substantiated. **16–20**
- L3:** The answer will show some understanding of the full demands of the question and the answer will be adequately organised. There will be appropriate information showing an understanding of some key features and/or issues but the answer may be limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some comment in relation to the question. **11–15**
- L2:** The answer will be descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. **6–10**
- L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1–5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and students 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.

Arguments supporting the view that, in the years 1886 to 1905, the Conservatives did little to improve the quality of life of the working classes might include:

- Salisbury and most leading Conservatives remained attached to the principles of self-help and laissez-faire. No specific action was taken in response to Royal Commissions on unemployment (1886), on labour (1895) and the aged poor (1895)
- the reports of Booth and Rowntree revealed that around 30% of people were living below the poverty line at any given time. Over 40% of volunteers for the Boer War were rejected due to their poor physical condition. Such evidence suggested that little had been done to improve the quality of life of the working classes in the preceding years
- the rise of New Liberalism, of the Labour Party, and of new mass trade unions all suggest that there was a strong feeling that more significant action was needed to improve the quality of life for the working classes. Furthermore, Joseph Chamberlain justified his campaign for tariff reform by arguing that the money raised could be spent on social welfare
- there was no legislation in relation to trade unions throughout the period and the Conservatives did nothing to overturn the controversial Taff Vale judgement after 1901. Nor was there any action to improve conditions for workers in the sweated industries.

Arguments challenging the view that, in the years 1886 to 1905, the Conservatives did little to improve the quality of life of the working classes might include:

- the Conservatives passed legislation to improve factory conditions for women and children, and they introduced the first Workmen's Compensation Act in 1897
- in education, the 1891 Act removed fees for elementary schooling. The 1892 Public Libraries Act had a significant impact on improving literacy rates, and the 1902 Education Act established state responsibility for secondary education and created LEAs
- the Housing of the Working Classes Act (1890) extended the powers of councils to pull down existing slums through compulsory purchase orders and provided a borrowing facility so that councils could fund the development of better quality social housing
- measures were introduced to improve public health. In 1891, existing public health legislation was extended so that London was covered by the same regulations. It gave greater powers to public health officials to deal with specific threats to health. The 1904 Licensing Act aimed to prevent the sale of alcohol to children and to guarantee the quality of alcoholic drinks.

Overall, students may conclude that the evidence of the early 20th century, from the recruitment for the Boer War and from Rowntree's report into poverty, strongly suggests that the Conservatives had indeed done little to improve the quality of life of the working classes. That Chamberlain – a member of the Conservative government himself – incorporated increased spending on social welfare as part of his tariff reform campaign also suggests that there was a widespread recognition that much more needed to be done. However, alternatively, students may point to the fact that the Conservatives won several elections in this period, which followed the expansion of the franchise in 1884, and therefore it appears that a significant proportion of the working-class electorate were not dissatisfied with the measures that the Conservatives had introduced to address living and working conditions.

- 0 3** 'In the years 1900 to 1914, Labour established itself as an influential party in British politics.'

Explain why you agree or disagree with this view.

[25 marks]

Target: AO1

Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.

Generic Mark Scheme

- L5:** Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment leading to substantiated judgement. **21–25**
- L4:** Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be analytical comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance. However, there may be some generalisation and judgements will be limited and only partially substantiated. **16–20**
- L3:** The answer will show some understanding of the full demands of the question and the answer will be adequately organised. There will be appropriate information showing an understanding of some key features and/or issues but the answer may be limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some comment in relation to the question. **11–15**
- L2:** The answer will be descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. **6–10**
- L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1–5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and students 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.

Arguments supporting the view that in the years 1900 to 1914, Labour established itself as an influential party in British politics might include:

- between 1900 and 1914, Labour increased the number of seats it held in parliament from 2 to 42. This was partly the result of the Lib-Lab Pact negotiated in 1903. The Liberals clearly felt the need to negotiate with Labour as a party to be taken seriously
- Labour was able to influence a number of acts introduced by the Liberal governments after 1906. Free school meals, the overturning of the Taff Vale judgement and payment for MPs were all issues that Labour had initially raised and which the Liberals went on to legislate for
- the increasing influence of New Liberalism and the welfare policies that it inspired can easily be depicted as a response to the rising threat of Labour to the Liberal Party and their ability to win working-class votes. Lloyd George referenced the challenge of Labour in a number of speeches
- Labour's performance in the two general elections of 1910 was significant to the ability of the Liberal government to defeat Conservative opposition to the 'People's Budget' and to enable the passing of the Parliament Act (1911).

Arguments challenging the view that in the years 1900 to 1914, Labour established itself as an influential party in British politics might include:

- the number of seats won by Labour was not significant, especially in the context of the Liberals' huge majority from 1906 to 1910. Even after 1910, the Liberals could rely on the support of the Irish Nationalists, so in terms of parliamentary arithmetic the Labour Party was not that influential
- the social welfare reforms of the Liberal governments of this period were so significant that Labour had to approve of them. The impression created was that Labour was merely hanging onto the coat-tails of the Liberals. The Lib-Lab Pact could be interpreted in the same way
- there were divisions within the Labour Party over ideology and policy. The ILP and Fabians pushed for a more socialist platform against the more moderate leadership. The radical action of some trade unions and syndicalists from 1910 to 1914 associated Labour in the minds of many with dangerous radicalism. Labour lost four seats in by-elections, 1910–14
- Labour's finances suffered a serious setback between 1909 and 1913 due to the Osborne Judgement. In those four years, the automatic payments from union membership subscriptions to Labour's political fund were stopped, seriously depleting the party's income.

Overall, students may conclude that Labour clearly had to be taken seriously as a rising political force in these years, as evidenced by the Liberals' desire to negotiate the Lib-Lab pact as well as the far-reaching extent of the Liberal social reforms of the period. Therefore, Labour's mere existence and its potential for attracting working-class voters are sufficient reasons to credit the party with having at least an indirect influence on British politics before the First World War. However, alternatively, students may argue that Labour's direct influence on British politics was more limited. Its numbers in parliament were negligible and the party was still in the process of establishing a coherent policy platform, national organisation and stable finances. The Liberal governments would have been able to act in the way they did without the support of Labour. Furthermore, it could be argued that, by 1914, Labour's progress seemed to be faltering and it was struggling to shake off the image of being the Liberals' 'radical tail'.