



AS

HISTORY

7041/1J

The British Empire, c1857–1967

Component 1J The High Water Mark of the British Empire, c1857–1914

Mark scheme

June 2025

Version: 1.0 Final



2 5 6 A 7 0 4 1 / 1 J / M S

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)

Copyright information

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered schools/colleges for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to schools/colleges to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Copyright © 2025 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

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 relations between Britain and the Boers in southern Africa in the years 1867 to 1890?

[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 interpretation/arguments/views.

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

- the relationship between Britain and the Boers became increasingly strained due to the actions of Britain after 1881
- the discovery of diamonds in the area and the plans for a southern African federation by Britain created tension between the Boers and Britain
- the British government believed they had a right to intervene in the Transvaal's domestic and foreign policy and the Boers resented this leading to an increase in tension.

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

- the discovery of diamonds in 1867 resulted in much greater British interest in southern Africa which led to the annexation of Griqualand West in 1871. This caused tension in the relationship between Britain and the Boers due to the expansion of British territory and influx of British workers
- the British had first proposed a federation in 1875 so the annexation of the Transvaal in 1877 was not a spur of the moment action. The annexation of the Transvaal worsened the relationship between the Boers and the British because it resulted in increasing nationalistic feeling among the Boers
- the wording of the agreement signed in Pretoria in 1881 after the First Boer War had ended left room for Britain to intervene in the domestic affairs of the Transvaal at a later date if they so wished, resulting in ambiguity in the relationship between the two countries
- the interpretation could be challenged because Gladstone had come to power criticising the annexation of the Transvaal and had promised in his Midlothian campaign to give them back their independence. He had already sued for peace before the defeat at Majuba Hill. Therefore, it could be argued the relations between the British and the Boers were more amicable than is portrayed in the interpretation.

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

- the relationship between the British and the Boers had been hostile since the 1860s but worsened due to the actions of the Boers in the 1880s
- the entry of Germany into the area led to Britain being concerned about an alliance between them and the Boers
- the discovery of gold exacerbated the tension between the British and the Boers.

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

- the discovery of diamonds in 1867 and resultant British actions changed the relationship between the British and the Boers. During the 1880s, the Boers exerted control in the Transvaal and built a new railway to the coast which worried Britain who felt their dominant position was under threat, further increasing tensions
- this threat was exacerbated by the arrival of Germany who had already established a colony in Namibia. The Transvaal's president, Paul Kruger, declared his country's friendship with

Germany. Britain responded by annexing Bechuanaland in 1884 which had previously been under the control of the Boers resulting in a further deterioration in relations

- the discovery of gold transformed the economic situation in southern Africa as it shifted economic power away from the Cape to the Transvaal, meaning that the relationship had appeared to swing in favour of the Boers
- the threat of the Boers and the Germans to Britain could be said to be over-exaggerated. In 1890, Britain and Germany signed a treaty establishing spheres of influence in East Africa. The Boer threat was also minimal as Britain remained the dominant power in the region, both territorially and economically, demonstrating little change in the relationship.

In arriving at a judgement as to which extract provides the more convincing interpretation, students might conclude that it was the expansionist actions of the British, as seen in Extract A, which created the tension in the relationship between the British and the Boers. Others may argue that Extract B provides the more convincing interpretation as the Boers knew that the creation of an independent railway line to the coast, and the close links with Germany, would have been unacceptable to Britain and they deliberately increased tensions in the area to try and reassert their position, causing a deterioration in the relationship between the two.

Section B

- 0 2** 'The actions of colonial administrators, in the years 1890 to 1914, led to a strengthening of British rule in Africa.'

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 the actions of colonial administrators, in the years 1890 to 1914, led to a strengthening of British rule in Africa might include:

- the actions of colonial administrators in many cases led to an expansion of British rule in Africa. This can be seen with Cecil Rhodes, who as Prime Minister of the Cape Colony established Fort Salisbury in Mashonaland in 1890, which then became southern Rhodesia in 1895
- the actions of Alfred Milner and Joseph Chamberlain contributed to the outbreak of the Second Boer War of 1899 to 1902, which led to an expansion of British territory as both the Orange Free State and the Transvaal were incorporated into the empire
- other colonial administrators strengthened British rule by increasing British control in the different colonies. For example, Evelyn Baring, Kitchener and Gorst in Egypt
- the increase in the economic prosperity of some colonies, due to the actions of the administrators, could be argued to have strengthened British rule. This can be evidenced by the action of Baring in Egypt who dealt with the budget problems that had occurred in the 1880s and, under his rule, cotton and sugar exports trebled and the population increased from seven to ten million.

Arguments challenging the view that the actions of colonial administrators, in the years 1890 to 1914, led to a strengthening of British rule in Africa might include:

- in some cases, the actions of colonial administrators led to open rebellion against British rule. In Sierra Leone the introduction of a new dwelling tax by Colonel Cardew in 1898, known as the 'hut tax', provoked a rebellion which resulted in hundreds of indigenous people being killed. Baring's response to the Denshawai incident also led to a questioning of British rule by the Egyptians
- at times, the actions of colonial administrators created resentment in the longer term, for example, Chamberlain and Milner's actions in southern African can be seen to have helped cause the Second Boer War.
- the economic policies of colonial administrators at times weakened British rule, as often the policies led to little economic gain for Britain, which could be argued to have led to instability in British rule due to the resulting lack of financial investment in those colonies. At times the economic policies can be viewed as having led to unhappiness among indigenous people due to corruption and a lack of economic opportunity.
- Attitudes can be seen to have been caused bitterness. For example, in Egypt the unwillingness to extend educational or employment opportunities.

Students may conclude that the actions of administrators in expanding the empire, in terms of territory and economic prosperity, were crucial in strengthening British rule from both European rivals and indigenous people. Alternatively, they may argue that the mishandling of events by some administrators or their attitudes towards the indigenous people led to resentment which in the long term undermined British rule in Africa.

NB: Colonial administrators included both 'men on the spot' and the office of the Colonial Secretary in London. Students who refer exclusively to the former are eligible for the full range of marks.

Students may approach the question by arguing that British rule in Africa was strengthened by other factors, such as agreements made with France and Germany. This is a valid approach to the question.

0 3 'Popular support for imperialism in Britain declined in the years 1895 to 1914.'

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 popular support for imperialism in Britain declined in the years 1895 to 1914 might include:

- critics emerged during and after the Boer War due to reports from Emily Hobhouse into the conditions in the British concentration camps. The British public also reacted in horror to the events in Sierra Leone in 1898 and the treatment of the Chinese indentured labourers in the Cape Colony by Milner's administration
- John A Hobson, an economist who wrote *Imperialism* in 1902, believed that imperial expansion was driven by a search for new markets and only benefited a small and powerful elite. This left-wing critique was picked up by others who felt that the empire was driving down wages in Britain
- criticism could also be seen in the works of poets, such as Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, children's books by Walter Crane and novels such as *War of the Worlds* by H G Wells
- the huge defeat at the 1906 election by the Conservatives who ran on a pro-Empire, imperial preference platform demonstrated a loss of support for imperialism. The Conservative Party also lost the 1910 general election, demonstrating the longer-term drop in support. The increasing popularity of the Labour Party in the early 20th century could also be seen as evidence of the drop in support for imperialism.

Arguments challenging the view that popular support for imperialism in Britain declined in the years 1895 to 1914 might include:

- popular support for imperialism can be seen during this period with the public displays of enthusiasm which greeted the Boer War in 1899 and the Conservative's victory in the 'khaki election' of 1900. The mass volunteering of men to fight in this war can be argued to demonstrate a support for imperialism
- neither political party argued against imperialism, demonstrating a consensus of support. The empire was also used to help celebrate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897 and King George V's coronation in 1911 when a Festival of Empire was held
- popular support for imperialism can also be found in the popular culture of this period with much of it celebrating Britain's 'imperial glory'. For example, newspapers, books and music
- the growth of imperialistic youth groups at this time demonstrates how imperialism's popularity was across all ages. The use of imperial images to sell products, such as tea and coffee, demonstrates its appeal to the British public and its popular support.

Students may come to the conclusion that popular support for imperialism did decline during this period due to the moral questions which were raised about British action in the colonies; therefore, there was a decline in the belief of the moralising mission that Britain had previously used as a reason for expansion. Students may point to the 1906 election as the defining evidence of this lack of belief in the empire as a force for good either at home or abroad and therefore a decline in support for imperialism. Alternatively, they may argue that although people were unwilling to pay more for the empire they still bought into the idea of imperialism as something exciting and something to be proud of. The fact that neither political party argued for the empire's dissolution and the protests that did occur were limited in scope demonstrates that imperialism still had popular support.