



A-level HISTORY 7042/1J

Component 1J The British Empire, c1857–1967

Mark scheme

June 2025

Version: 1.0 Final



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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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Supporting Marking Guidance

A separate Supporting Marking Guidance document has been created for use in this series and any future series.

It has been written by the senior examining team. It applies to all A-level History options. The purpose of the guidance is to clarify key aspects of the mark scheme and further ensure consistency of approach across all options. The guidance does not reflect a change in the standard applied, but clarification and amplification of the standard. We hope that the guidance document will aid you in your understanding of how the standard should be applied and deepen your understanding of how the key aspects of the mark scheme work. The Supporting Marking Guidance should always be used in conjunction with the mark scheme, and any relevant examiner standardising and teacher training material.

Examiners can find the Supporting Marking Guidance on the associate extranet.

Teachers can find the Supporting Marking Guidance alongside the current mark scheme on Centre Services on results day. It will also be published with any future assessment materials on the public website.

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** Using your understanding of the historical context, assess how convincing the arguments in these three extracts are in relation to British decolonisation in the years 1947 to 1967.

[30 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:** Shows a very good understanding of the interpretations put forward in all three extracts and combines this with a strong awareness of the historical context to analyse and evaluate the interpretations given in the extracts. Evaluation of the arguments will be well-supported and convincing. The response demonstrates a very good understanding of context. **25–30**
- L4:** Shows a good understanding of the interpretations given in all three extracts and combines this with knowledge of the historical context to analyse and evaluate the interpretations given in the extracts. The evaluation of the arguments will be mostly well-supported, and convincing, but may have minor limitations of depth and breadth. The response demonstrates a good understanding of context. **19–24**
- L3:** Provides some supported comment on the interpretations given in all three extracts and comments on the strength of these arguments in relation to their historical context. There is some analysis and evaluation but there may be an imbalance in the degree and depth of comments offered on the strength of the arguments. The response demonstrates an understanding of context. **13–18**
- L2:** Provides some accurate comment on the interpretations given in at least two of the extracts, with reference to the historical context. The answer may contain some analysis, but there is little, if any, evaluation. Some of the comments on the strength of the arguments may contain some generalisation, inaccuracy or irrelevance. The response demonstrates some understanding of context. **7–12**
- L1:** **Either** shows an accurate understanding of the interpretation given in one extract only **or** addresses two/three extracts, but in a generalist way, showing limited accurate understanding of the arguments they contain, although there may be some general awareness of the historical context. Any comments on the strength of the arguments are likely to be generalist and contain some inaccuracy and/or irrelevance. The response demonstrates limited understanding of context. **1–6**
- 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:

- Britain's decision to decolonise in the two decades after the Second World War was due to economic considerations
- the recovery of countries in Western Europe in the 1950s had left Britain increasingly economically isolated, and this led to Britain falling behind other countries
- the attempt to economically develop Britain's colonies post the Second World War had failed and they were becoming more, not less, dependent on Britain

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

- by the 1960s, Britain's exports and imports to Western Europe outstripped those to the Empire
- Britain's isolation was demonstrated by its attempt to join the EEC being rejected in 1963 and 1967 and its weak position shown through the sterling devaluation of 1967 which demolished its imperial position
- a number of attempts were made at developing the colonies, for example the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts of 1940 and 1945, the Colonial Development Corporation of 1948 and the Tanganyika Groundnut Scheme 1948. None of these efforts however, produced the economic returns that Britain had hoped for. Also, Europe's rapid economic recovery and the USA's economic predominance post-1945 meant that the UK's economy tilted away from the Empire
- the interpretation can be challenged, however, as some colonies, such as Malaya, remained economically important throughout the 1950s and Britain fought hard against the communist threat there. Also, the value of exports from British colonies did increase post-1945 demonstrating that economic development did occur.

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

- decolonisation occurred as Britain no longer had the economic, military or geopolitical power to keep an empire
- the United States felt that having Britain as an ally may lead to British colonies choosing to side with the USSR and not themselves
- the Suez Crisis demonstrated that Britain could no longer act on its own to sustain its empire.

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

- the Second World War had led to Britain becoming financially and militarily reliant on the USA. The USA and USSR were now the world's superpowers and were able to dictate international developments. Britain's weakened position is shown by the formation of SEATO in 1954 when Britain was replaced by the USA as the guarantors of the Dominions' safety
- in the Middle East the USA was concerned about communist expansion and therefore they replaced Britain as the main economic partner of those countries. In many British colonies nationalist leaders were unhappy about the poverty and inequality that existed in their countries and blamed Britain for

this. The threat of communism was demonstrated by the insurgency which occurred in Malaya in the 1950s

- it was the USA's economic pressure that forced Britain to end their invasion of Egypt in 1956
- the interpretation can be challenged as it suited the USA to have a strong Britain to resist communism and this is shown by them allowing Britain to re-establish its control over its colonies post-1945.

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

- Britain's attempt to economically develop its colonies created the conditions in which resistance could be organised
- the methods that Britain used to defeat the nationalist movements ultimately undermined its rule and led to decolonisation
- by the 1960s, nationalist movements and world opinion had forced Britain to withdraw from its colonies.

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

- the rapid improvements in agricultural and industrialisation which Britain attempted to initiate post the Second World War meant that less power was given to traditional indigenous leaders resulting in resistance against British rule. The failure of economic schemes, for example the Tanganyika Groundnut Scheme, led to farmers turning to nationalist movements
- the repressive methods that Britain used to subdue resistance, such as the Mau Mau uprising in Kenya, undermined any moral justification for imperial rule that Britain had attempted to use
- the atrocities committed in Kenya, but also in other colonies, led to further resistance and violence making it impossible for Britain to continue ruling and it was forced to decolonise at a much faster rate than it had intended
- the interpretation can be challenged as Britain was able to subdue resistance in its colonies and it was a conscious choice made by the British government to decolonise rather than something which was forced upon them by nationalist groups.

Section B

- 0 2** 'British policy towards Egypt, in the years 1875 to 1898, was driven by economic concerns.'

Assess the validity of 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 very good understanding of the full demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively delivered. The supporting information will be well-selected, specific and precise. It will show a very good understanding of key features, issues and concepts. The answer will be fully analytical with a balanced argument and well-substantiated judgement. **21–25**
- L4:** Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. It 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 relating to the question. The answer will be well-balanced with some judgement, which may, however, be only partially substantiated. **16–20**
- L3:** 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, but may, however, be unspecific or lack precision of detail. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be a good deal of comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance, but a number of statements may be inadequately supported and generalist. **11–15**
- L2:** The answer is 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 British policy towards Egypt, in the years 1875 to 1898, was driven by economic concerns might include:

- after the 1875 purchase of shares in the Suez Canal, Britain's trade began to increasingly rely on this route to Europe from the East. Its importance to British trade meant that it could not be allowed to fall into another country's hands. By 1882, a large majority of trade passing through the Canal was British and over a tenth of Britain's imports came through this route
- the reliance of British industry on Egyptian cotton, after the loss of the American colonies, meant that Britain would be keen to ensure it remained within their sphere of influence
- by 1878, Egypt owed £100 million to European countries, with a large percentage of that owed to Britain. Therefore, the initiation of Dual Control in 1878 was entirely influenced by the desire to ensure that this money would be repaid
- British investment in Egypt during this period meant that it became increasingly important to ensure that Sudan was also under British control to protect the source of the Nile and provide a buffer zone for the Suez Canal. This can be said to have been a motivation for the Battle of Omdurman in 1898 and Fashoda in 1898.

Arguments challenging the view that British policy towards Egypt, in the years 1875 to 1898, was driven by economic concerns might include:

- the purchase of shares in the Suez Canal in 1875, and then the subsequent actions taken to protect the Canal in 1882 leading to the veiled protectorate, demonstrate its strategic importance in enabling Britain to transport troops quickly to their Asian colonies. The shortening of the journey to India by 6000 miles by the Suez Canal meant that Britain's actions in Egypt and the Sudan were driven by the strategic necessity to protect that sea route
- international relations also played an important role in British policy as there was the perpetual concern of Britain that Russia would gain access to the Mediterranean by taking advantage of the declining Ottoman Empire. France was also a concern in Egypt as they had built the Suez Canal and had been part of the Dual Control initiated in 1878. The actions of Britain in 1882 were the result of the worry that France may move to take control of Egypt. In 1898 Britain took control of the Sudan due to the perceived French threat, having previously been content with just Egypt
- the actions of the Consul-General, Evelyn Baring, drove British policy as he was determined to reform Egyptian economic, military, social and cultural life
- events within Egypt drove British policy as the mismanagement of the Egyptian economy by Isma'il Pasha, the rebellion by Arabi Pasha and the Mahdist rebellions required a British response. Gladstone in particular was reluctant to get involved but events meant that Britain had to intervene.

Students may argue that the economic importance of Egypt drove British policy, with even Gladstone investing heavily in Egypt. The economic importance of the Suez Canal and the natural resources within Egypt meant that Britain couldn't not intervene in 1878 and 1882 when these interests were threatened. The resulting investment within the area by the British drew Sudan into their sphere of interest meaning that when their interests were threatened in 1896 and 1898 the British government had to act. Alternatively, some students may argue that the strategic importance of the Suez Canal to Britain in regards to India, the jewel in the British crown, meant that policy in Egypt would always have been driven by strategic concerns. Whereas others may argue that the British were reacting to the concern that other European countries may move to take control of this area, in particular France, and therefore Britain had to react first.

- 0 3** 'In the years 1890 to 1914 the actions of indigenous people in India posed a significant challenge to British rule.'

Assess the validity of 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 very good understanding of the full demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively delivered. The supporting information will be well-selected, specific and precise. It will show a very good understanding of key features, issues and concepts. The answer will be fully analytical with a balanced argument and well-substantiated judgement. **21–25**
- L4:** Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. It 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 relating to the question. The answer will be well-balanced with some judgement, which may, however, be only partially substantiated. **16–20**
- L3:** 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, but may, however, be unspecific or lack precision of detail. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be a good deal of comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance, but a number of statements may be inadequately supported and generalist. **11–15**
- L2:** The answer is 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 1890 to 1914 the actions of indigenous people in India posed a significant challenge to British rule might include:

- during this period, nationalist newspapers emerged and were seen as a significant enough challenge by the British to result in the imprisonment of the editors of Kesari and Kaal
- the Young India Society was founded which carried out a number of political assassinations of British officials resulting in its founders receiving harsh sentences from the British, again demonstrating that the British viewed them as a significant challenge
- a significant challenge came from the boycott of British goods which was launched after the partition of Bengal in 1905 as it undermined British political and economic rule of the country. The partition also led to the formation in 1906 of the All Muslim League which adopted self-government as its aim in 1913
- the resulting reunification of Bengal in 1911 under Viceroy Hardinge demonstrates the level of challenge the boycott had posed to the Empire in India.

Arguments challenging the view that in the years 1890 to 1914 the actions of indigenous people in India posed a significant challenge to British rule might include:

- the challenges posed by nationalist newspapers were dealt with by the British with minimal problem as the editors were imprisoned and the publications were banned. Membership of Young India was never widespread, restricting its ability to pose a significant challenge to British rule
- the reunification of Bengal was carried out on British terms to coincide with the visit of George V, rather than as a result of the British believing their rule was challenged
- Indian support in 1914 for Britain after the declaration of the First World War, and throughout the war, demonstrates that British rule was not significantly challenged in the years running up to it
- for the most part during this period Britain was able to deal with challenges to their rule through a combination of legal repression and concessions, such as the 1909 Indian Council Act which increased representation of the Indian people in local government.

Students may come to the conclusion that the actions of indigenous people did pose a significant challenge to British rule in India as the British had to react with repression or violence to impose their control. The increasing nationalist movements were hard for the British to entirely quell, creating a constant concern for the security of their rule, demonstrating the challenge they posed. Alternatively, students may argue that although nationalist movements did emerge during this period, British rule was never significantly challenged as they were of limited size and dealt with using repression rather than violence. Most Indians were fighting for dominion status rather than full independence, demonstrating that the challenge posed to British rule was minimal.

- 0 4** To what extent did economic relations between Britain and its empire change in the years 1919 to 1947?

[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 very good understanding of the full demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively delivered. The supporting information will be well-selected, specific and precise. It will show a very good understanding of key features, issues and concepts. The answer will be fully analytical with a balanced argument and well-substantiated judgement. **21–25**
- L4:** Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. It 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 relating to the question. The answer will be well-balanced with some judgement, which may, however, be only partially substantiated. **16–20**
- L3:** 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, but may, however, be unspecific or lack precision of detail. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be a good deal of comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance, but a number of statements may be inadequately supported and generalist. **11–15**
- L2:** The answer is 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 economic relations between Britain and its empire changed in the years 1919 to 1947 might include:

- throughout the inter-war period there was considerable change in economic relations as some areas increased in importance and others declined. Economic relations between Britain and India declined as Britain exported less to India as the Japanese were able to take advantage of Britain's weakness post the First World War. In contrast, the economic relations between Britain and the Dominions increased in importance as the Dominions became a more important market for Britain's exports
- Britain initially tried to recreate the economic system in which the Empire had no special preference. This attempt, however, was abandoned in the aftermath of the Great Depression when a greater emphasis was placed on the Empire, which demonstrated a change in economic relations between Britain and its empire
- the introduction of imperial preference in 1932 at the Ottawa Conference ended Britain's historic policy of free trade and again placed a greater emphasis on the Empire, demonstrating a change in economic relations
- post the Second World War, due to its huge debts and the loss of a lot of its merchant fleet, the economic relations between Britain and its empire changed to a large extent as Britain took a dual approach to its colonies. Those colonies whose costs of running them outstripped their economic value were abandoned, eg India and Burma, whereas those with potential were heavily invested in, eg Malaya.

Arguments challenging the view that economic relations between Britain and its empire changed in the years 1919 to 1947 might include:

- due to the huge economic impact that the First World War and the Second World War had on the British economy, there was limited change in the economic relations between Britain and its empire. The period was marked throughout by a high value placed on the Empire by the British government from 1919 as a way to help the country recover. This increased reliance on the Empire continued during and after the Second World War as Britain's dependence on the Empire for imports continued and it invested a lot in the colonies to help increase the supply of foodstuffs and raw materials
- throughout the period, the Empire held a position of importance for British commerce and imports, as demonstrated by the percentage share of total British imports that were from the colonies, demonstrating little change in economic relations
- the Empire, particularly the Dominions, continued over the period to be a valuable market for British overseas investment and exports
- the importance of the Empire to the British economy is shown by the Colonial Development Act of 1929 and the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts of 1940 and 1945 which were an attempt to fund colonial development projects.

Students may argue that, throughout this period, economic relations between Britain and its empire changed to a large extent as Britain had to construct a new economic relationship with its colonies once it became apparent that the existing one was no longer fit for purpose, particularly once the 1929 Wall Street Crash had occurred. Alternatively, students may argue that there was limited change as throughout the period Britain continued to place a high value on its colonies due to the economic benefit they did, or could, bring. The new Acts which were introduced served to enshrine the economic importance of the colonies, rather than indicating any change in relationship.