



A-level HISTORY 7042/2M

Component 2M Wars and Welfare: Britain in Transition, 1906–1957

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

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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** With reference to these sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying Winston Churchill's government in the years 1951 to 1955.

[30 marks]*Target: AO2*

Analyse and evaluate appropriate source material, primary and/or contemporary to the period, within the historical context.

Generic Mark Scheme

- L5:** Shows a very good understanding of all three sources in relation to both content and provenance and combines this with a strong awareness of the historical context to present a balanced argument on their value for the particular purpose given in the question. The answer will convey a substantiated judgement. The response demonstrates a very good understanding of context. **25–30**
- L4:** Shows a good understanding of all three sources in relation to both content and provenance and combines this with an awareness of the historical context to provide a balanced argument on their value for the particular purpose given in the question. Judgements may, however, be partial or limited in substantiation. The response demonstrates a good understanding of context. **19–24**
- L3:** Shows some understanding of all three sources in relation to both content and provenance together with some awareness of the historical context. There may, however, be some imbalance in the degree of breadth and depth of comment offered on all three sources and the analysis may not be fully convincing. The answer will make some attempt to consider the value of the sources for the particular purpose given in the question. The response demonstrates an understanding of context. **13–18**
- L2:** The answer will be partial. It may, for example, provide some comment on the value of the sources for the particular purpose given in the question but only address one or two of the sources, or focus exclusively on content (or provenance), or it may consider all three sources but fail to address the value of the sources for the particular purpose given in the question. The response demonstrates some understanding of context. **7–12**
- L1:** The answer will offer some comment on the value of at least one source in relation to the purpose given in the question but the response will be limited and may be partially inaccurate. Comments are likely to be unsupported, vague or generalist. 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 deploy knowledge of the historical context to show an understanding of the relationship between the sources and the issues raised in the question, when assessing the significance of provenance, the arguments deployed in the sources and the tone and emphasis of the sources. Descriptive answers which fail to do this should be awarded no more than Level 2 at best. Answers should address both the value and the limitations of the sources for the particular question and purpose given.

Source A: in assessing the value of this source, students may refer to the following:

Provenance, tone and emphasis

- Massingham provides a valuable perspective as an experienced/leading political commentator/journalist; he is likely to be well-informed, with contacts with senior politicians
- his comments may be challenged for political bias – ‘The Observer’ is a centre-left newspaper; conversely, it is a ‘quality’ newspaper and be considered a valuable source of comment
- the article is written about nine months after the Conservatives came to power, valuable because one might not have expected such ‘disquiet’ in the party after such a short period
- the source could be thought valuable for its measured and balanced tone.

Content and argument

- Massingham is arguing that the Conservative government is in some disarray and that Churchill may be partly responsible; Churchill’s view of himself by this time as someone above the day-to-day of domestic politics – more the international statesman – may be referenced in support
- Massingham refers to the government lacking direction, which links with contemporary criticism of Churchill’s frequent absenteeism, spending more time abroad than in Downing Street, and his unconventional work routines
- he insinuates that the government had underlying problems related to ‘personalities and ambitions’, a valuable reference to the tensions and competition for preferment apparent in the top echelons of the party, particularly between Butler, Macmillan and Eden; he may also be referring to the concern felt about Churchill using non-Conservative peers to oversee government ministries (notably Lords Woolton and Feathers)
- Massingham’s opinion of Churchill as ‘a giant’ among his contemporaries is valuable for illustrating his enduring appeal and reputation as the man who won the war, though the reference to his contemporaries as ‘pygmies’ can be challenged: the party had men of ability (Butler, Eden, Macmillan); moreover, even by June 1952, Churchill was showing signs of ageing and incapacity.

Source B: in assessing the value of this source, students may refer to the following:

Provenance, tone and emphasis

- Eden was Churchill's heir apparent (for almost a decade): his diary is a very valuable personal/private insight into the relationship between the two men
- it is particularly valuable in highlighting Eden's increasing impatience at Churchill blocking his own personal ambitions
- the date of the diary extract is valuable for illustrating just how soon – just over a year into Churchill's premiership – that Eden exerted pressure on Churchill to stand down
- Eden's candid and critical tone is valuable to historians for emphasising the tensions in the party and in the depth of feeling on all sides: of Churchill feeling he was being 'forced out' and of Cabinet members feeling the need to press the issue.

Content and argument

- Eden is arguing that Churchill seems constantly to want to push back his resignation; it is a valuable insight into both men's mindset; students may link Churchill's position to his personality – his feeling that he was 'indispensable'
- students may also reference the international situation at the time as a reason for him hanging on: Churchill believed he had a key role to play in preventing the 'cold war' from becoming 'hot'
- the source is valuable for demonstrating the growing frustration with Churchill's constant prevarication: he was notably reluctant to take unpopular policy decisions that might disrupt the post-war consensus, particularly stalling over concerns about the increasing costs of the welfare state and the 1951–52 balance of payments crisis
- Churchill also had a tendency to act without consultation: for example, he gave in to the wage demands of the railway unions in 1953 without including Butler in the negotiations, much to Butler's displeasure, who wanted to take a harsher line.

Source C: in assessing the value of this source, students may refer to the following:

Provenance, tone and emphasis

- Brain is valuable as an objective observer, having met Churchill on numerous occasions in a professional capacity; as a political outsider, he is unlikely to be politically motivated/biased
- this essay is written over a decade after the events outlined. This could be thought a limitation, but Brain emphasises that he often recorded his conversations with notable individuals; the fact it is published shortly after Churchill's death may also be thought valuable – part of a contemporary focus on Churchill as prime minister/leader
- the essay was published in a prestigious medical journal, which adds value because it would be unlikely to publish anything obviously scurrilous or misleading and is open to peer review
- value is also added because Brain is unlikely to be writing for publicity or reward.

Content and argument

- Brain is arguing that Churchill was an impressive individual with a strong sense of duty, implying that he felt Churchill had much to offer as Prime Minister; he is largely uncritical, which could be thought a limitation
- Churchill's stroke was in June 1953; Brain's statement that Churchill still intended to continue as Prime Minister is valuable in helping to understand Churchill's mindset: he had previously intimated he might stand down around that time but he did not resign as Prime Minister, albeit very reluctantly, until April 1955
- students may link Churchill 'only' wanting to discuss foreign affairs with his overriding interest in Cold War issues; he remained preoccupied throughout 1953 in setting up a summit meeting, which took place in Bermuda in December 1953, between Britain, the USA and France to discuss common approaches to the Soviet Union
- Brain's reference to Churchill feeling he had done a better job than Eden as Foreign Secretary offers further valuable insight into the deteriorating relationship between the two men; Churchill's competence, claiming he still had 'his bite', might be challenged: the greater achievements of his government were down to others, such as Butler (the economy), Woolton (party reorganisation) and Macmillan (housing); he resisted decolonisation and handled the Mau Mau rebellion in Kenya badly.

Section B

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- To what extent were the reforms of the Liberal governments, in the years 1906 to 1911, due to New Liberalism?

[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 the reforms of the Liberal governments, in the years 1906 to 1911, were due to New Liberalism might include:

- leading members of the Liberal governments were committed to a new direction for Liberalism. Increasingly, attitudes towards those in poverty were changing, due to the findings of reports like those of Booth and Rowntree. Men like Asquith, Lloyd George and Churchill became convinced that greater state intervention, as opposed to the traditional *laissez-faire* approach, was now necessary
- New Liberals believed that the state should put 'safety nets' in place to prevent hard working and vulnerable citizens from falling into poverty. Key pieces of Liberal legislation which reflect this include the introduction of the Old Age Pensions which provided a lifeline for the most vulnerable
- New Liberals, however, also believed that people should continue to help themselves and that they should not simply rely upon handouts from the state. This is evidenced in the limited nature of some of the reforms, such as National Insurance. Here, employees in certain industries would qualify for unemployment or sickness insurance but these schemes were contributory, and the workers themselves had to pay a certain amount into them – these were not simply 'handouts' from the state
- some New Liberals argued that, in order to pay for any reforms, there should be some redistribution of income by taxing the rich more and diverting this money to the poor. Elements of Lloyd George's 'People's Budget' clearly had this aim in mind, as did much of his rhetoric when campaigning.

Arguments challenging the view that the reforms of the Liberal governments, in the years 1906 to 1911, were due to New Liberalism might include:

- it could be argued that the Liberals introduced policies because they felt threatened by Labour. As a more left-wing party, Labour wanted to introduce policies which benefited the working classes, and the Liberals realised that they might lose voters if they did not look like they were willing to offer policies, such as National Insurance and Labour Exchanges, that would be popular with these voters
- it could be argued that the Liberals introduced policies in order to damage their rivals, the Conservatives. The 'People's Budget' was viewed as an attack on the rich by the Conservatives and the resulting constitutional crisis paved the way for reforms to the House of Lords, which would end the Conservative monopoly of the Upper Chamber through the 1911 Parliament Act
- It could be argued that the Liberals were more concerned with 'national efficiency' rather than being motivated by philosophical ideas. The Boer War highlighted the poor state of health and there were increasing concerns about Britain's ability to defend itself and the Empire. This motivated policies such as the Free School Meals and medical checks for children, which would lead to healthier adults
- some of the reforms introduced by the Liberals in these years were quite traditional in nature and did not really reflect a new approach to Liberalism. Examples might include the provision of Free School Meals, which was only permissive rather than being made compulsory
- it could be argued that personal ambition of individual politicians explains why some policies were introduced. David Lloyd George was an ambitious politician and perhaps used provocative legislation, such as the 'People's Budget' in order to increase his popularity and advance his career.

Students might argue that New Liberalism was a key motivating factor in the design and implementation of the range of reforms introduced in the years 1906 to 1911. There was certainly a change in approach and attitudes towards the problems of poverty when compared with earlier *laissez-faire* policies.

However, students might argue that politicians are unlikely to have had only one factor motivating them and that preservation of their party's dominance, as well as their own careers, will have also factored into decision making and the policies they promoted. Any supported judgement will be rewarded.

- 0 3** 'The First World War had a disastrous impact on the British economy in the years 1914 to 1918.'

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 the First World War had a disastrous impact on the British economy in the years 1914 to 1918 might include:

- the war massively increased the National Debt – from £650 million to £8000 million. The government was also forced to abandon the gold standard, which caused serious inflation
- the huge demands posed by war created shortages of both materials and workers, causing huge disruption to the economy; food and raw materials became scarcer as the war went on; prices and taxation both increased significantly
- Britain lost its predominance in many of its traditional global markets as a consequence of the massive disruption to patterns of trade, exacerbating the long-term downward trends of the British economy
- the wartime blockade led to many overseas purchasers of British goods developing their own manufacturing industries or opening up to foreign competitors, such as Japan, which gained a strong foothold in the Indian textiles market
- the economy suffered from increasing industrial unrest as the war progressed: 6 million days were lost to strikes in 1918 alone; the war greatly disrupted employment patterns with unions often complaining about dilution of the labour force, particularly through the use of female labour.

Arguments challenging the view that the First World War had a disastrous impact on the British economy in the years 1914 to 1918 might include:

- the productivity of the British economy increased rapidly in the war years as production expanded to meet the huge demand for goods and materials. For example, by 1917 the output of steel was about 25% higher than in 1913
- Britain's gross domestic product increased (by approximately 14%); the British economy, therefore, had evidently been able to adapt and thus sustain a total war effort
- new industries emerged/developed to counter the loss of international markets, such as chemicals, dyes and electric power; the war virtually created a new aircraft industry
- British agriculture performed well in the war years: the ready availability of agricultural land, combined with higher prices, incentivised production to counter the disruption to imports and exports; therefore, it can be argued that wartime agricultural production remained remarkably stable – rationing was not implemented until early 1918
- workers also had the benefit of full employment and a rise in real wages.

In a number of key respects, the war clearly damaged the British economy, particularly in terms of indebtedness and loss of markets. By the end of the war the British economy was on its knees. The demands of total war had proved unprecedented, putting enormous strain on the economic fabric of the country. Early hopes of 'business-as-usual' quickly eroded. However, the transition from a market-driven economy to a command economy meant that the British economy succeeded in meeting the demands placed on it. Perhaps a balanced assessment might conclude that the war was not an absolute disaster for the British economy, but that it nevertheless hastened its underlying decline and that the years 1914 to 1918 were a significant turning point in damaging, in particular, the staple industries and Britain's global pre-eminence as a trading nation.

0 4 'Living standards, in the years 1933 to 1939, improved for the people of Britain.'

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.

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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 living standards, in the years 1933 to 1939, improved for the people of Britain might include:

- new industries, particularly the motor car industry, developed, and the staple industries began a slow recovery after the Depression; the upshot of this was a growth of new employment opportunities at a time when prices stayed relatively low, contributing to increased consumption and rising living standards overall
- real wages also increased over the period, working hours decreased and cheaper borrowing all stimulated consumer demand, improving living standards; at no time did retail prices move ahead of wages
- a decline in family size, particularly in the better off social groups, also meant that those in work had more disposable income
- other social and economic developments also contributed to improving living standards: the wider availability of electric power (through the expansion of the National Grid); the expansion of mass and popular entertainment and advertising; the rapid growth of the services sector; the Housing Acts of 1933 and 1935 provided councils with subsidies to clear slums and to tackle overcrowding
- rearmament in the later 1930s not only stimulated newer industries but also the staple industries, bringing investment and jobs and, therefore, a boost to living standards in the depressed regions.

Arguments challenging the view that living standards, in the years 1933 to 1939, improved for the people of Britain might include:

- the impact of the newer industries on overall living standards was limited: such industries were located in the already relatively prosperous areas of the South-East and Midlands
- long-term structural unemployment in the staple industries was a major feature of the period, blighting regions such as South Wales and the North-East: as late as 1938 one-fifth of coal miners and one quarter of cotton workers were unemployed; in these areas it was a time characterised by dole queues and the collapse of local economies and symbolised by the Jarrow March in 1936
- endemic poverty was not only confined to the black spots where the staple industries were located: in 1936 Rowntree estimated that over 30% of working-class people in York were living below the poverty line
- the 'Means Test' imposed by the government on the poor actively worsened living standards: not only was it humiliating but led in many cases to benefits being stripped; it was one of the most hated innovations of the National Government, actively contributing to malnutrition, ill-health and an increase in suicide rates of those 'tested'
- despite a housing boom, there still remained a housing shortage in 1939: the construction of new houses focused more on the upper and middle ranges of the market, with far less council housing built than private accommodation; Rowntree's study of York found that more than half the people living in slum accommodation did so because they could afford nothing else.

It can be argued that overall, there was an improvement in living standards and the quality of life in Britain in this period. Despite images of the period as the 'hungry thirties', many people benefited from higher real wages, shorter working hours and were able to enjoy a range of new consumer products. However, for many in the depressed regions of Britain this emerging affluence was little more than a dream. The reality for many in these areas, particularly the long-term unemployed, was symbolised by a life of grim poverty under the yoke of the 'Means Test' with little opportunity of escape. A balanced conclusion may be that one's living standards were starkly dependent on where you lived, what class you belonged to and whether you had work: a divided country with highly variable living standards.