



GCE

History A

Y317/01: China and its rulers 1839-1989

A Level

Mark Scheme for June 2025

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This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and students, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which marks were awarded by examiners. It does not indicate the details of the discussions which took place at an examiners' meeting before marking commenced.

All examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and the report on the examination.

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MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

PREPARATION FOR MARKING RM ASSESSOR

1. Make sure that you have accessed and completed the relevant training packages for on-screen marking: *RM Assessor Online Training: OCR Essential Guide to Marking*.
2. Make sure that you have read and understood the mark scheme and the question paper for this unit. These are available in RM Assessor
3. Log-in to RM Assessor and mark the **required number** of practice responses (“scripts”) and the **required number** of standardisation responses.

MARKING

1. Mark strictly to the mark scheme.
2. Marks awarded must relate directly to the marking criteria.
3. The schedule of dates is very important. It is essential that you meet the RM Assessor 50% and 100% (traditional 40% Batch 1 and 100% Batch 2) deadlines. If you experience problems, you must contact your Team Leader (Supervisor) without delay.
4. If you are in any doubt about applying the mark scheme, consult your Team Leader by telephone or the RM Assessor messaging system, or by email.
5. **Crossed Out Responses**
Where a candidate has crossed out a response and provided a clear alternative then the crossed out response is not marked. Where no alternative response has been provided, examiners may give candidates the benefit of the doubt and mark the crossed out response where legible.

Rubric Error Responses – Optional Questions

Where candidates have a choice of question across a whole paper or a whole section and have provided more answers than required, then all responses are marked and the highest mark allowable within the rubric is given. Enter a mark for each question answered into RM assessor, which will select the highest mark from those awarded. *(The underlying assumption is that the candidate has penalised themselves by attempting more questions than necessary in the time allowed.)*

Multiple Choice Question Responses

When a multiple choice question has only a single, correct response and a candidate provides two responses (even if one of these responses is correct), then no mark should be awarded (as it is not possible to determine which was the first response selected by the candidate).

When a question requires candidates to select more than one option/multiple options, then local marking arrangements need to ensure consistency of approach.

Contradictory Responses

When a candidate provides contradictory responses, then no mark should be awarded, even if one of the answers is correct.

Short Answer Questions (requiring only a list by way of a response, usually worth only **one mark per response**)

Where candidates are required to provide a set number of short answer responses then only the set number of responses should be marked. The response space should be marked from left to right on each line and then line by line until the required number of responses have been considered. The remaining responses should not then be marked. Examiners will have to apply judgement as to whether a 'second response' on a line is a development of the 'first response', rather than a separate, discrete response. *(The underlying assumption is that the candidate is attempting to hedge their bets and therefore getting undue benefit rather than engaging with the question and giving the most relevant/correct responses.)*

Short Answer Questions (requiring a more developed response, worth **two or more marks**)

If the candidates are required to provide a description of, say, three items or factors and four items or factors are provided, then mark on a similar basis – that is downwards (as it is unlikely in this situation that a candidate will provide more than one response in each section of the response space.)

Longer Answer Questions (requiring a developed response)

Where candidates have provided two (or more) responses to a medium or high tariff question which only required a single (developed) response and not crossed out the first response, then only the first response should be marked. Examiners will need to apply professional judgement as to whether the second (or a subsequent) response is a 'new start' or simply a poorly expressed continuation of the first response.

6. Always check the pages (and additional objects if present) at the end of the response in case any answers have been continued there. If the candidate has continued an answer there, then add a tick to confirm that the work has been seen.

7. There is a NR (**No Response**) option. Award NR (No Response):

- if there is nothing written at all in the answer space
- OR if there is a comment which does not in any way relate to the question (e.g., 'can't do', 'don't know')
- OR if there is a mark (e.g., a dash, a question mark) which is not an attempt at the question.

Note: Award 0 marks – for an attempt that earns no credit (including copying out the question).

8. The RM Assessor **comments box** is used by your team leader to explain the marking of the practice responses. Please refer to these comments when checking your practice responses. **Do not use the comments box for any other reason.**

If you have any questions or comments for your team leader, use the phone, the RM Assessor messaging system, or e-mail.

9. Assistant Examiners will send a brief report on the performance of candidates to their Team Leader (Supervisor) via email by the end of the marking period. The report should contain notes on particular strengths displayed as well as common errors or weaknesses. Constructive criticism of the question paper/mark scheme is also appreciated.

10. For answers marked by levels of response:

- a. **To determine the level** – start at the highest level and work down until you reach the level that matches the answer
- b. **To determine the mark within the level**, consider the following

Descriptor	Award mark
On the borderline of this level and the one below	At bottom of level
Just enough achievement on balance for this level	Above bottom and either below middle or at middle of level (depending on number of marks available)
Meets the criteria but with some slight inconsistency	Above middle and either below top of level or at middle of level (depending on number of marks available)
Consistently meets the criteria for this level	At top of level

11. Annotations

Annotation	Meaning
	Blank Page
	Highlight
Off-page comment	
	Assertion
	Analysis
	Evaluation
	Explanation
	Factor
	Illustrates/Describes
	Irrelevant, a significant amount of material that does not answer the question
	Judgement
	Knowledge and understanding
	Simple comment
	Unclear
	View
	Synthesis
	Continuity/Change

Question		Answer	Mark	Guidance
1		Evaluate the interpretations in both of the two passages. Explain which you think is more convincing as an explanation of the nature and course of the Cultural Revolution. In locating the interpretations within the wider historical debate, answers might suggest that Interpretation A argues that while the Cultural Revolution was generally very popular among the young and workers, attitudes toward it rapidly fragmented. • In evaluating Interpretation A, answers might argue that it correctly identifies the political role of the PLA, whom Mao eventually used to crush the Red Guards and re-establish order. • Answers might argue that Interpretation A correctly notes the enthusiasm of the young - with use of the Little Red Book, the rise of the Red Guards, and Mao's instruction to 'Bombard the Headquarters'. • Answers might argue that Interpretation A correctly argues that overall control of the Cultural Revolution was always in Mao's hands, despite saying "to rebel is justified" and that he simply used the young to sweep away the old leadership and bureaucracy. • Answers might argue that Interpretation A is accurate in drawing attention to the gradual fragmentation of the Red Guards, with factional fighting and violence against the Scarlet Guards and even the PLA.	30	The indicative content lists features of the period studied that relate to the question set. <u>Neither significance nor relative importance are attributed to the features listed.</u> The indicative content is intended to reflect the knowledge and understanding a candidate is likely to analyse and evaluate in order to arrive at a judgement in line with the question set. • No set answer is expected. • At Level 5 and above answers will evaluate both interpretations, locating them within the wider historical debate about the issue and using their own knowledge, and will reach a balanced judgement as to which they consider the most convincing about the issue in the question. • To be valid judgements they must be supported by relevant and accurate material. • Knowledge must not be credited in isolation. It should only be credited where it is used to analyse and evaluate the sources, in line with the descriptions in the levels mark scheme.

Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
			- Answers might argue that Interpretation A underestimates the fanaticism of the Red Guards – attacking teachers, smashing historical sites etc., - Answers might argue that Interpretation A underestimates the fanaticism of the PLA which continued the purges and sent millions to work in the countryside or to the laogai camps. In locating the interpretations within the wider historical debate, answers might suggest that Interpretation B suggests that the Cultural Revolution was very unpopular among a wide range of people. In evaluating Interpretation B answers might argue that Interpretation B is accurate about Mao's focus of getting rid of Liu Shaoqi and Deng, and the resistance offered by a few of their supporters, such as Zhou Enlai, and the early Scarlet Guards. - Answers might argue that the image of chaos given by Interpretation B is justified, as soldiers, workers and youth groups often attacked CCP officials, and millions were persecuted as members of the 5 Black Categories, such as counter-revolutionaries and right-wingers. - Answers might argue that Interpretation B is correct in implying that many leaders of the PLA were hostile to the Cultural Revolution as in 1971 Lin Biao attempted to overthrow Mao. - Answers might argue that Interpretation B correctly refers to the unpopularity of Jiang Qing and the Gang of Four, as demonstrated		

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Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
			by the ease with which they were overthrown in 1976. • Answers might argue that Interpretation B is accurate about the reluctance of the Chinese people to criticise Mao directly, due to the cult of personality. • Answers might argue that Interpretation B is invalid as it implies that key members of the army were hostile to the Cultural Revolution, but Lin Biao, the effective leader of the army, was one of the founders of the cult of Mao. • Answers might argue that Interpretation B is invalid as Wuhan was where Mao swam in the Yangtze in 1966, causing wild enthusiasm not the hostility shown here.		

Question		Answer	Mark	Guidance
2*		‘Throughout the period from 1839 to 1989, changes to the nature of government in China were only possible through violence.’ How far do you agree? Answers might consider some of the following themes: Uprisings and rebellions, ideological changes and continuity, regional issues, nature of government, repression. • In supporting the hypothesis in the question, it might be argued that the most important change in the nature of Chinese government came with the Communist takeover in 1949, which brought a new ideology, and destroyed the old ruling class, and that this was the result of a civil war. • Answers might consider the importance of the 1911 revolution and the overthrow of the Qing and the hereditary principle, which was only achieved by violent uprising. • Answers might suggest that the violent events of the Cultural Revolution caused the nature of government of China to change significantly, with the overthrow of Liu Shaoqi and Deng and their cautious, consensual approach. • Answers might consider the Taiping Uprising, which briefly created an independent state in south-east China, and which had by 1860 assembled an army of over half a million men, causing a major civil war. • Answers might consider that the ending of the power of the warlords and the establishment of a central government by the Guomindang was	25	How far do you agree? The indicative content lists features of the period studied that relate to the question set. Both features that support the hypothesis and features that challenge the hypothesis are detailed. <u>Neither significance nor relative importance are attributed to the features listed.</u> The indicative content is intended to reflect the knowledge and understanding a candidate is likely to analyse and evaluate in order to arrive at a judgement in line with the question set. • No set answer is expected • At higher levels answers might establish criteria against which to judge • To be valid, judgements must be supported by relevant and accurate material. • Knowledge must not be credited in isolation, it should only be credited where it is used as the basis for analysis and evaluation, in line with descriptions in the levels mark scheme.

Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
			only achieved by war, such as the Northern Expedition. • In challenging the hypothesis in the question, it might be argued that the takeover of Deng Xiaoping and the consequent move to a somewhat more open government and a capitalist economy was achieved without violence. • Answers might suggest that, despite frequent outbreaks of violence, there has been very little change in the essential nature of government over the period, with centralisation of power in Beijing, and most power remaining firmly in the hands of just one person, whether Cixi, Yuan Shikai, Jiang Jieshi, Mao or Deng. • Answers might consider that violence was often used to prevent change, for example the crushing of provincial autonomy by the Qing in the Panthay Rebellion, and by Mao in Tibet and Xinjiang; the destruction of any hope of constitutional democracy by Yuan Shikai and Deng. • Answers might suggest that it was not violence that was at the heart of changes to the nature of government in China, but ideology. The change from hereditary monarchy and Confucianism to western capitalism and democracy in 1911, and from capitalism and military dictatorship to communist equality and party rule in 1949.		

Question		Answer	Mark	Guidance
3*		‘The most important change in the Chinese economy during the period from 1839 to 1989 was the growth of industry.’ How far do you agree? Answers might consider some of the following themes: industrial expansion, changing ideology, the role and influence of foreign powers, agriculture, nature of land ownership, trade and investment. • In supporting the hypothesis in the question, Answers might consider Deng’s Second Modernisation and the way that trade flourished, large numbers of people moved to the cities, and wages rose, after rapid industrial growth had been established. • it might be argued that the Self-Strengthening movement by establishing a middle class of industrialists, businessmen, financiers and entrepreneurs, was essential in creating a modern economy. As was its work in developing textiles and mining industries, improving transport and introducing joint stock companies. • Answers might refer to the way that the Guomindang and Communist governments provided subsidies to help industries to establish themselves (e.g. Shanghai’s industry, railways, steel manufacture, Deng’s Special Economic Zones). This shows the growth of industry was seen as central to improvement in the Chinese economy.	,25	How far do you agree? The indicative content lists features of the period studied that relate to the question set. Both features that support the hypothesis and features that challenge the hypothesis are detailed. <u>Neither significance nor relative importance are attributed to the features listed.</u> The indicative content is intended to reflect the knowledge and understanding a candidate is likely to analyse and evaluate in order to arrive at a judgement in line with the question set. • No set answer is expected • At higher levels answers might establish criteria against which to judge • To be valid, judgements must be supported by relevant and accurate material. • Knowledge must not be credited in isolation, it should only be credited where it is used as the basis for analysis and evaluation, in line with descriptions in the levels mark scheme.

Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
			- Answers could suggest that industrialisation was crucial to resisting foreign interference. The technological superiority of the West and Japan had ensured several defeats, and it was only with the expansion of modern industries, culminating in the development of nuclear weapons, that China was able to resist foreign pressure. - Answers could argue that industrialisation was essential to improving agriculture. The failure of the Great Leap Forward and its failed attempt to accelerate industrialisation, resulted in China's greatest ever famine. In contrast the success of Deng Xiaoping's development of modern farming technology prevented further famines. In challenging the hypothesis answers could consider that in 1839 China was an overwhelmingly rural society, and that the same was still true in 1989, so what mattered for most people was the improvement of agriculture. - Answers might argue that the key economic issue in China was land ownership, and that by ending the private ownership of land, the Communist government created an entirely new economic situation, accelerated by the destruction of much of the Chinese middle class. - Answers might suggest that the development of trade was the most important change in China's economy. When Deng opened China to		

Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
			international trade the economic situation rapidly strengthened and foreign investment increased, enabling further development, and the growth of an urban middle class of businessmen and entrepreneurs. Answers might consider Deng's Four modernisations and point out that industry was only one of these, and that the other three – agriculture, education and defence – were equally important.		
4*			The Korean War (1950-1953) was the most important turning point in China's relations with the wider world during the period from 1839 to 1989. How far do you agree? Answers might consider some of the following themes: Chinese intervention abroad, alliances, Chinese relationships with foreign powers, impact of foreign intervention in China, the role of hegemonic powers. In supporting the hypothesis answers could consider that joining the Korean War was the first major foreign policy decision taken by Mao's government, and that it involved aggressive action outside China's political boundaries, something no Chinese government had undertaken for over a century. - Chinese involvement in the Korean War led to its subsequent involvement in the Vietnam War and 20 years of hostile relations with the USA,	25	How far do you agree? The indicative content lists features of the period studied that relate to the question set. Both features that support the hypothesis and features that challenge the hypothesis are detailed. <u>Neither significance nor relative importance are attributed to the features listed.</u> The indicative content is intended to reflect the knowledge and understanding a candidate is likely to analyse and evaluate in order to arrive at a judgement in line with the question set. - No set answer is expected - At higher levels answers might establish criteria against which to judge - To be valid, judgements must be supported by relevant and accurate material. - Knowledge must not be credited in isolation, it should only be credited where it is used as the basis for analysis and evaluation, in line with descriptions in the levels mark scheme.

Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
			a complete contrast to Jiang Jieshi's pro-US foreign policy. • Involvement in the Korean War can be seen as demonstrating a new approach to foreign relations, based on ideology, with a focus on helping to protect and expand Communism in Asia. • Taking part in the Korean War can be seen as the beginning of Chinese moves towards establishing the nation as a world power, with its influence, and economic involvement, spreading as far as Albania, Pakistan, Zimbabwe and Somalia. • Answers could consider that in allying itself with the USSR over Korea, China's relations with the wider world were very different from its previous approaches of isolationism (under the Qing) and alliances with Western powers (under the Guomindang). • In challenging the hypothesis answers could consider that by taking part in the Korean War, China was continuing a tradition established during the 'unequal treaties' – of being dominated by foreign powers, in this case the USSR. • Answers could consider that the Korean War was not a success, with huge losses of manpower and the failure to take South Korea. This failure can be put alongside previous failures such as the Opium Wars, the Boxer Rebellion, the defeats against Japan and the establishment of Nationalist China in Taiwan.		

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Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
			- Answers could consider that the alliance with the USSR was short-lived, with growing Sino-Soviet hostility after 1953, and the border war of 1969. - Answers could consider other turning points, , e.g. 1911 - the overthrow of the Qings and the end of the policy of isolationism; 1931-7 - the Japanese attacks leading to all-out war and alliance with the USA; 1945-9 - the defeat of Japan and the resultant Communist victory; 1964 - the development of atomic weapons making China a regional superpower; 1972-80 – the rapprochement with the USA and the economic opening up of China under Deng ensuring the arrival of China on the world stage.		

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APPENDIX 1 – this contains a generic mark scheme grid

	<i>AO3: Analyse and evaluate, in relation to the historical context, different ways in which aspects of the past have been interpreted.</i>
	Generic mark scheme for Section A, Question 1: Interpretation [30]
Level 6 26–30 marks	The answer has a very good focus on the question throughout. It has thorough and sustained evaluation of the interpretations, using detailed and accurate knowledge of the historical context and the wider historical debate around the issue, in order to produce a convincing and supported analysis of them in relation to the question.
Level 5 21–25 marks	The answer has a good focus on the question throughout. It has good evaluation of the interpretations, using relevant knowledge of the historical context and the wider historical debate around the issue, in order to produce a supported analysis of them in relation to the question.
Level 4 16–20 marks	The answer is mostly focused on the question. It has evaluation of the interpretations based on generally relevant knowledge of the historical context and the wider historical debate around the issue, in order to produce an analysis of them in relation to the question.
Level 3 11–15 marks	The answer is partially focused on the question. It has partial evaluation of the interpretations based on some knowledge of the historical context and the wider historical debate around the issue. There may be some use of information from one of the two interpretations to support the evaluation of the other, but the evaluation will not rely on this. There is a limited analysis of the interpretations in relation to the question.
Level 2 6–10 marks	The answer has a limited focus on the question. Parts of the answer are just description of the interpretations, with evaluation in relation to historical context and the wider historical debate around the issue being weak, and evaluation relying heavily on information drawn from the other interpretation. There is a very limited analysis of the interpretations in relation to the question.
Level 1 1–5 marks	The answer has some relevance to the topic, but not the specific question. The answer consists mostly of description of the interpretations with very limited evaluation based on very generalised knowledge of historical context and minimal or no reference to the wider historical debate. Analysis of the interpretations in relation to the question is either in the form of assertion or lacking.
0 marks	No evidence of understanding and no demonstration of any relevant knowledge.

	<i>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.</i>
	Generic mark scheme for Section B, Questions 2, 3 and 4: Essay [25]
Level 6 21–25 marks	The answer has a very good focus on the question. Detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding is used to analyse and evaluate key features of the period studied in order to reach a fully developed synthesis supporting a convincing and substantiated judgement. There is a well-developed and sustained line of reasoning which is coherent and logically structured. The information presented is entirely relevant and substantiated.
Level 5 17–20 marks	The answer has a good focus on the question. Generally accurate and detailed knowledge and understanding is used to analyse and evaluate key features of the period studied in order to reach a developed synthesis supporting a substantiated judgement. There is a well-developed line of reasoning which is clear and logically structured. The information presented is relevant and in the most part substantiated.
Level 4 13–16 marks	The answer is mostly focused on the question. Relevant knowledge and understanding is used to analyse and evaluate key features of the period studied in order to reach a synthesis supporting a reasonable judgement. There is a line of reasoning presented with some structure. The information presented is in the most-part relevant and supported by some evidence.
Level 3 9–12 marks	The answer has a partial focus on the question. Some relevant knowledge and understanding is used to analyse and explain key features of the period studied in order to attempt an undeveloped synthesis, which is linked to a judgement, though the supporting explanation may lack detail and clarity. The information has some relevance and is presented with limited structure. The information is supported by limited evidence.
Level 2 5–8 marks	The answer has only a limited focus on the question. Limited relevant knowledge and understanding is used to give a limited explanation and analysis of key features of the period studied. There is a judgement but this may not be clearly linked with the supporting explanation. The information has some relevance, but is communicated in an unstructured way. The information is supported by limited evidence and the relationship to the evidence may not be clear.
Level 1 1–4 marks	The answer has a limited focus on the topic, but not the specific question. The answer is largely descriptive, with only very generalised knowledge of the period studied being used to attempt basic explanation and very limited analysis. Judgements are unsupported and are not linked to analysis. Information presented is basic and may be ambiguous or unstructured. The information is supported by limited evidence.
0 marks	The answer contains no relevant information.

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