



GCSE HISTORY 8145/2B/A

Paper 2 Section B/A: Norman England, c1066–c1100

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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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.

0	1
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How convincing is **Interpretation A** about towns and villages in Norman England?

Explain your answer based on your contextual knowledge and what it says in **Interpretation A**.

[8 marks]

The indicative content is designed to exemplify the qualities expected at each level and is not a full exemplar answer. All historically relevant and valid answers should be credited.

Target

Analyse individual interpretations (AO4a)
Evaluate interpretations and make substantiated judgements in the context of historical events studied (AO4d)

Level 4:

Complex evaluation of interpretation with sustained judgement based on contextual knowledge/understanding

7–8

Extends Level 3.

Students may progress from a developed evaluation of interpretation by complex analysis of the interpretation supported by factual knowledge and understanding.

For example, the interpretation is convincing because between 1066 and 1100, 21 new towns were built around England and the well-off townsfolk were an elite who prospered after the conquest. They paid the King for the rights to hold markets and fairs. They became wealthy, they paid services and taxes to the Lord and they could buy and sell property. Lincoln, for example, had 970 burgesses. Burgesses might be craftspeople, such as goldsmiths or merchants and each of them formed guilds which had a lot of power. However, for the peasants who farmed and lived in villages, life did not change much under the Normans.

Level 3:

Developed evaluation of interpretation based on contextual knowledge/understanding

5–6

Extends Level 2.

Students may progress from a simple evaluation of the interpretation by extended reasoning supported by factual knowledge and understanding of more than one aspect of the interpretation.

For example, the interpretation is convincing because the towns of Norman England benefited from a boost to the economy after the Conquest. Under the Normans, towns grew around cathedrals which they built, for example, at Durham, Ely, and Winchester. They also built castles for their defence in towns like York and Lincoln and destroyed houses to build them. However, these castles boosted the town which grew around them and became a centre for more trade. There were obvious links with Normandy and towns in Europe where there was a trade in wool to Flanders and wine from Gascony to Bristol.

Level 2:	Simple evaluation of interpretation based on contextual knowledge/understanding	3–4
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Students may progress from a basic analysis of interpretation by reasoning supported with factual knowledge and understanding based on one aspect of the interpretation.

For example, the Normans built castles and towns grew up near them. The castles protected the Norman nobles and became centres for trade. After the Norman Conquest 2800 grants were given to towns to hold markets or fairs. The first was given by King William to the Bishop of Winchester to hold a 'free fair.'

Level 1:	Basic analysis of interpretation based on contextual knowledge/understanding	1–2
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Answers may show understanding/support for interpretation, but the case is made by assertion/recognition of agreement.

For example, each peasant was responsible for farming a number of strips and paid the Lord for the land with a share of his crops or working on the Lord's land.

Students either submit no evidence or fail to address the question	0
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0 2

Explain what was important about the Domesday Book.

[8 marks]

The indicative content is designed to exemplify the qualities expected at each level and is not a full exemplar answer. All historically relevant and valid answers should be credited.

Target **Explain and analyse historical events and periods studied using second-order concepts (AO2:4)**
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key features and characteristics of the period studied (AO1:4)

Level 4: **Complex explanation of consequences** **7–8**
Answer demonstrates a range of accurate and detailed knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question

Extends Level 3.

Students may progress from a developed explanation by extended analysis of the consequences of the stated development (the Domesday Book) in the broader historical context (Norman England). This is supported by factual knowledge and understanding.

For example, what was important because, although the reasons for it are unclear, it could be seen as a blueprint for a feudal society. It was really a picture of the new Anglo-Norman society and shows how little or how much had changed. It shows us a big change – that the Normans had conquered England. The country was still owned by about 250 people, it was just that now they were foreigners, not Anglo-Saxons.

Level 3: **Developed explanation of consequences** **5–6**
Answer demonstrates a range of accurate knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question

Extends Level 2.

Students may progress from a simple explanation by developed reasoning considering **two or more** of the identified consequences, supporting them by factual knowledge and understanding.

In addition to a Level 2 response, students make additional developed point(s).

For example, what was important was in 1085, William needed money to resist a threatened invasion by Vikings and the Count of Flanders. As well as knowing how much he could raise in taxes, the survey also told him what military service was owed.

Level 2:	Simple explanation of one consequence Answer demonstrates specific knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question	3–4
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Students may progress from a basic explanation by simple reasoning of **one** of the identified consequences, supporting by factual knowledge and understanding.

For example, William wanted to reward his followers with land. The Domesday Book showed who had received what. About 170 of William's nobles gained 30% of the land in England. William demanded that everyone give his commissioners honest answers under oath about what they owned and therefore the taxes he could expect to collect from them.

Level 1:	Basic explanation of consequence(s) Answer demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question	1–2
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Students identify consequence(s), which are relevant to the question. Explanation at this level is likely to be implicit or by assertion.

For example, the Domesday Book was a great list of everything in England that William owned.

Students either submit no evidence or fail to address the question	0
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0 3

Write an account of how William the Conqueror dealt with revolts against Norman rule in the years 1067 to 1075.

[8 marks]

The indicative content is designed to exemplify the qualities expected at each level and is not a full exemplar answer. All historically relevant and valid answers should be credited.

Target **Explain and analyse historical events and periods studied using second-order concepts (AO2:4)**
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key features and characteristics of the period studied (AO1:4)

Level 4: **Complex analysis of change(s)** **7–8**

Answer is presented in a coherent narrative/account that demonstrates a range of accurate and detailed knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question

Extends Level 3.

Students may progress from a developed narrative of change(s) with complex reasoning supported by a range of accurate and detailed factual knowledge and understanding. For example, an explanation of different impacts/consequences of change in the broader historical context.

For example, the Normans dealt with the rebellions and revolts so ruthlessly and that was why William decided to teach the North a lesson and carry out the 'Harrying of the North'. William was determined that the Anglo-Saxons should know he was in control and it showed how important was his personal leadership. When there was a rebellion from Edwin and Morcar, in Wales, and in Exeter, William knew that he should not expect the cooperation of the native Anglo-Saxon nobles. It confirmed that he was right to replace them with Normans and to stamp out revolts decisively to stop the rebel groups linking up.

Level 3: **Developed analysis of change(s)** **5–6**

Answer is presented in a structured and well-ordered narrative/account that demonstrates a range of accurate knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question

Extends Level 2.

Students may progress from a simple narrative of change(s) with extended reasoning supported by a range of factual knowledge and understanding.

For example, the revolts were dealt with ruthlessly. The Earls' revolt was the last serious challenge to the Norman conquest of England and it came from Normans themselves dissatisfied with William's decision about Earl Ralph's marriage. It was also important that it was put down so quickly so that it sent a

message to the Norman aristocracy that rebelling would be dealt with viciously whether it was from the Normans or Anglo-Saxons nobles.

Level 2:	Simple explanation of one change(s) Answer is presented in a structured account that demonstrates specific knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question Students may progress from a basic narrative of change(s) by showing a simple understanding of consequence(s) supported with factual knowledge and understanding. For example, the Normans had to deal with the Earl's revolt in 1075 when Roger, Earl of Hereford, and Ralph, Earl of East Anglia, along with Waltheof rebelled. They were dealt with by Lanfranc and Odo. Roger was imprisoned, Earl Waltheof was beheaded, Ralph lost all his lands.	3–4
Level 1:	Basic explanation of change(s) Answer is presented in a straightforward account that demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question Students identify a basic narrative of change(s), which is relevant to the question. For example, they surrounded Hereward the Wake at Ely. He had a grudge against William and his Norman earls as they confiscated lands from his father and killed his brother.	1–2
	Students either submit no evidence or fail to address the question	0

Question 04 requires students to produce an extended response. Students should demonstrate their ability to construct and develop a sustained line of reasoning which is coherent, relevant, substantiated and logically structured.

0	4
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‘The main reason for building Norman cathedrals in England was to impress.’

How far does a study of **Durham Cathedral** support this statement?

Explain your answer.

You should refer to **Durham Cathedral** and your contextual knowledge.

[16 marks]

The indicative content is designed to exemplify the qualities expected at each level and is not a full exemplar answer. All historically relevant and valid answers should be credited.

Target

Explain and analyse historical events and periods studied using second-order concepts (AO2:8)
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key features and characteristics of the period studied (AO1:8)

To support their answer students could include aspects of the site such as: location, function, structure, design, people connected with the site, how the site reflects culture, values, and fashions of the time and how the site links to important events and/or developments of the specified period.

Level 4:

Complex explanation of cause leading to a sustained judgement
Answer demonstrates a range of accurate and detailed knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question

13–16

Answer demonstrates a complex, sustained line of reasoning which has a sharply-focused coherence and logical structure that is fully substantiated, with well-judged relevance.

Extends Level 3.

Students may progress from a developed explanation of causation by analysis of the relationship between them supported by factual knowledge and understanding of the site.

For example, although Durham Cathedral is a very clear Norman building and it acted as a symbolic statement to the Anglo-Saxons that the Normans were here to stay, and God was on their side. But it also showed that the Normans could use and adapt to England, integrating European and Anglo-Saxon life and culture. For example, in art and architecture the capitals in the castle chapel are like those found in Normandy. There were influences of St Peter's Basilica in the spiral columns at Durham and the intersecting arches may have been inspired by Islamic Spain. For the Benedictine monks who took over in Durham and had a devotion to saints, to preserve the Anglo-Saxon veneration

of St Cuthbert in Durham was easy and then the Normans added their own saints and relics.

Level 3: Developed explanation of cause

9–12

Answer demonstrates a range of accurate knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question

Answer demonstrates a developed, sustained line of reasoning which has coherence and logical structure; it is well substantiated, and with sustained, explicit relevance.

Extends Level 2.

Answers may suggest that one cause has greater merit.

Students may progress from a simple explanation of **causation** to a developed explanation of causation by extended reasoning supported by factual knowledge and understanding of the site.

For example, the main reason was for control, cathedrals like Durham became part of the Norman government and helped pacify and conquer England. Cathedrals were placed near centres of population. Bishops were given wide powers and had great revenue. Durham had a Prince Bishop from 1075. He defended the borders of England in the north and lived in a Castle next door to the Cathedral located on a defensible bend in the river and towering above the surrounding countryside. This sent a clear message from the Norman conquerors to the Anglo-Saxons.

For example, Durham Cathedral impressed not only with a magnificent stone structure unlike the previous wooden white church. But the Normans under Bishop William St Calais changed the religious life of the Cathedral by introducing a more religious group of Benedictine monks which was designed to catch up with the continental clergy who had become more disciplined and pious in their services, worship, and lifestyle.

Level 2:	Simple explanation of cause Answer demonstrates specific knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question Answer demonstrates a simple, sustained line of reasoning which is coherent, structured, substantiated and explicitly relevant. Students may progress from a basic explanation to a simple explanation of cause(s) by simple reasoning supported with factual knowledge and understanding of the site. For example, Durham Cathedral impresses with its stone built European styled wide aisles, decorated symmetrical capitals on top of round columns and rounded arches leading to vaulted high ceiling. Nothing like this had been seen in Anglo-Saxon England.	5–8
Level 1:	Basic explanation of cause Answer demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question Answer demonstrates a basic line of reasoning, which is coherent, structured with some substantiation; the relevance might be implicit. Students recognise and provide a basic explanation of cause(s). For example, the Norman cathedrals like Durham were a Romanesque style with rounded arches and a choir where the monks sat.	1–4
	Students either submit no evidence or fail to address the question	0