



A-LEVEL HISTORY

Unit HIS3E: France and the Enlightenment: Absolutism Under Threat, 1743–1789

Mark scheme

June 2015

Version 1: 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 Assessment Writer.

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.

Further copies of this Mark Scheme are available from aqa.org.uk

Generic Introduction for A2

The A2 History specification is based on the assessment objectives laid down in QCA's GCE History subject criteria and published in the AQA specification booklet. These cover the skills, knowledge and understanding which are expected of A Level students. Most questions address more than one objective since a good historian must be able to combine a range of skills and knowledge. Consequently, the marking scheme which follows is a 'levels of response' scheme and assesses students' historical skills in the context of their knowledge and understanding of History.

The levels of response are a graduated recognition of how students have demonstrated their abilities in the Assessment Objectives. Students who predominantly address AO1(a) by writing narrative or description will perform at Level 1 or low Level 2 if some comment is included. Students who provide more explanation – (AO1(b), supported by the relevant selection of material, AO1(a)) – will perform at Level 2 or low Level 3 depending on their synoptic understanding and linkage of ideas. Students who provide explanation with evaluation, judgement and an awareness of historical interpretations will be addressing all 3 AOs (AO1(a); AO1(b); AO2(b)) and will have access to the higher mark ranges.

To obtain an award of Level 3 or higher, students will need to address the synoptic requirements of A Level. The open-ended essay questions set are, by nature, synoptic and encourage a range of argument. Differentiation between performance at Levels 3, 4, and 5 therefore depends on how a candidate's knowledge and understanding are combined and used to support an argument and the how that argument is communicated.

The mark scheme emphasises features which measure the extent to which a candidate has begun to *'think like a historian'* and show higher order skills. As indicated in the level criteria, students will show their historical understanding by:

- The way the requirements of the question are interpreted
- The quality of the arguments and the range/depth/type of material used in support
- The presentation of the answer (including the level of communication skills)
- The awareness and use of differing historical interpretations
- The degree of independent judgement and conceptual understanding shown

It is expected that A2 students will perform to the highest level possible for them and the requirements for Level 5, which demands the highest level of expertise have therefore been made deliberately challenging in order to identify the most able students.

CRITERIA FOR MARKING GCE HISTORY:**A2 EXAMINATION PAPERS****General Guidance for Examiners (to accompany Level Descriptors)**

Deciding on a level and the award of marks within a level

It is of vital importance that examiners familiarise themselves with the generic mark scheme and apply it consistently, as directed by the Principal Examiner, in order to facilitate comparability across options.

The indicative mark scheme for each paper is designed to illustrate some of the material that students might refer to (knowledge) and some of the approaches and ideas they might develop (skills). It is not, however, prescriptive and should only be used to exemplify the generic mark scheme.

When applying the generic mark scheme, examiners will constantly need to exercise judgement to decide which level fits an answer best. Few essays will display all the characteristics of a level, so deciding the most appropriate will always be the first task.

Each level has a range of marks and for an essay which has a strong correlation with the level descriptors the middle mark should be given. However, when an answer has some of the characteristics of the level above or below, or seems stronger or weaker on comparison with many other students' responses to the same question, the mark will need to be adjusted up or down.

When deciding on the mark within a level, the following criteria should be considered *in relation to the level descriptors*. Students should never be doubly penalised. If a candidate with poor communication skills has been placed in Level 2, he or she should not be moved to the bottom of the level on the basis of the poor quality of written communication. On the other hand, a candidate with similarly poor skills, whose work otherwise matched the criteria for Level 4 should be adjusted downwards within the level.

Criteria for deciding marks within a level:

- Depth and precision in the use of factual information
- Depth and originality in the development of an argument
- The extent of the synoptic links
- The quality of written communication (grammar, spelling, punctuation and legibility; an appropriate form and style of writing; clear and coherent organisation of ideas, including the use of specialist vocabulary)
- The way the answer is brought together in the conclusion

June 2015

A2 Unit 3: The State and the People: Change and Continuity

HIS3E: France and Enlightenment: Absolutism Under Threat, 1743–1789

Question 1

- 01** 'The Maupeou Revolution was the most successful attempt to assert royal authority in France during the years 1743 to 1774.'
Assess the validity of this view. **[45 marks]**

Target: AO1(a), AO1(b), AO2(b)

Generic Mark Scheme for essays at A2

Nothing written worthy of credit. **0**

- L1:** Answers will display a limited understanding of the demands of the question. They may **either** contain some descriptive material which is only loosely linked to the focus of the question **or** they may address only a part of the question. Alternatively, they may contain some explicit comment but will make few, if any, synoptic links and will have limited accurate and relevant historical support. There will be little, if any, awareness of differing historical interpretations. The response will be limited in development and skills of written communication will be weak. **1-6**
- L2:** Answers will show some understanding of the demands of the question. They will **either** be primarily descriptive with few explicit links to the question **or** they may contain explicit comment but show limited relevant factual support. They will display limited understanding of differing historical interpretations. Historical debate may be described rather than used to illustrate an argument and any synoptic links will be undeveloped. Answers will be coherent but weakly expressed and/or poorly structured. **7-15**
- L3:** Answers will show an understanding of the demands of the question. They will provide some assessment, backed by relevant and appropriately selected evidence, which may, however, lack depth. There will be some synoptic links made between the ideas, arguments and information included although these may not be highly developed. There will be some understanding of varying historical interpretations. Answers will be clearly expressed and show reasonable organisation in the presentation of material. **16-25**
- L4:** Answers will show a good understanding of the demands of the question. They will be mostly analytical in approach and will show some ability to link ideas/arguments and information and offer some judgement. Answers will show an understanding of different ways of interpreting material and may refer to historical debate. Answers will be well-organised and display good skills of written communication. **26-37**
- L5:** Answers will show a very good understanding of the demands of the question. The ideas, arguments and information included will be wide-ranging, carefully chosen and closely interwoven to produce a sustained and convincing answer with a high level of synopticity. Conceptual depth, independent judgement and a mature historical understanding, informed

by a well-developed understanding of historical interpretations and debate, will be displayed. Answers will be well-structured and fluently written. **38-45**

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 will need to assess/identify and evaluate/explain the Maupeou Revolution itself and balance this against other domestic reforms. They may also establish some objective criteria for success which might reasonably include a range of factors – some focused on reforming France; others on cementing the authority of monarchy.

Students may refer to some of the following material in support of the Maupeou Revolution:

- the Maupeou Revolution was exactly that – a revolution in the relationship between Crown and Parlement. It effectively asserted the primacy of Divine Right over rising concepts of Fundamental Law
- the exiling of the Paris Parlement, and indeed the resignation of many leading magistrates illustrates just how effective the Revolution was
- the only time that the budget was balanced, and indeed showed a surplus was during the Maupeou years, and this was simply because of the removal of Parliamentary opposition
- the Revolution may be seen as the culmination of efforts to reform Parlement. The reluctance of the magistrates to engage in the process of reform led to Maupeou.

Nevertheless, the Maupeou Revolution may be considered unsuccessful:

- if Maupeou represents the triumph of royal authority, then at best it was a delegated authority. Louis XV seemingly took little interest in the affairs of the Triumvirate
- the greatest success of the Maupeou Revolution was over the Paris Parlement, yet the Parlement did not go away, but was simply in abeyance. The return of the magistrates was swift after the death of Louis XV. The Maupeou Revolution lacked any sense of permanence
- none of the reforms of the Triumvirate lasted. Those that did occur were as much about the triumph of factionalism as anything else. Indeed the Maupeou Revolution might reasonably be viewed as the victory of the sort of ministerial arrogance that had plagued the Ancien Regime monarchy
- it is perfectly possible to see the period as representing the collapse of authority, and the confirmation of ministerial despotism.

Furthermore, students may argue that other reforms were more successful:

- the Flagellation Speech and subsequent attempts to address both the rising status of Fundamental Law and also 'Ministerial Despotism' might be viewed to have been a more successful attempt to assert royal authority in the period
- the attempt to extend taxation was in part successful. Royal authority did avoid immediate crisis in this period due to the effective financial policies of some of the Controller Generals.

Question 2

- 02** 'Marie Antoinette played a major role in the weakening of the authority of the monarchy in the years 1774 to 1789.'
Assess the validity of this view. **[45 marks]**

Target: AO1(a), AO1(b), AO2(b)

Generic Mark Scheme for essays at A2

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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.

Students will need to assess/identify and evaluate/explain the role of Marie Antoinette and also perhaps her public person. An answer may focus entirely on Marie Antoinette suggesting areas in which she did and she did not weaken the authority of the monarchy. Alternatively, the role of Marie Antoinette may be balanced against other factors weakening royal authority in the years set. Students may also challenge the premise of Marie Antoinette having any negative effect at all, suggesting that seditious literature and anti-Antoinette sentiment developed after the events in question.

Students may refer to some of the following material in support of Marie Antoinette's role:

- Marie Antoinette's very nationality was representative of the new direction in French foreign policy which still dismayed many and led to open criticism of a king increasingly reluctant to take an interest in foreign affairs
- the Diamond Necklace Affair is testament to just how low the reputation of the queen and of the monarchy as a whole had sunk. The public nature of the trial, and the support that Cardinal de Rohan garnered proved just how far the monarchy had travelled from the widespread acceptance of Divine Right
- Marie Antoinette's apparently excessive spending, especially when at Versailles, combined with a prodigious gambling habit did nothing to convince the nation that the King was not in financial trouble, and provided ammunition for the magistrates seeking to prevent a financial reform that may have saved the monarchy but would also have introduced a more equitable system of taxation
- the emergence of the Queen's Party at court came just as Louis XVI retreated further into self-reflective and morose past times.

Students may refer to some of the following material suggesting that Marie Antoinette did not have a role to play:

- Marie Antoinette was possibly a figure of unpopularity in the new public sphere. 'Madame Deficit' and the 'Austrian bitch' were sobriquets reflecting a popular mood. But it might be argued that the fact she diverted so much hostility away from Louis XVI actually helped to preserve Royal Authority in this period. Hostility to the royal family in the press or pamphlets was not born with Antoinette. The poissonades might be good evidence of this
- the actual drain on royal finances as a consequence of Antoinette's lifestyle was negligible in the extreme
- as Louis XVI increasingly retreated from political decisions, Antoinette became more prominent, as did her faction at court. Her contribution to the continuation of royal government is underestimated.

Furthermore, students may argue that a number of factors were more important in the collapse of authority:

- Louis XVI's personality; his desire to be loved and his failure to support ministers and especially his Controller Generals might be considered more significant
- ministerial rivalry and the renewed opposition from Parlement after their recall in 1774 caused considerable problems for the monarchy. The May Edicts prove the extent of the concern

- monarchs had not been immune from factionalism at court throughout the Ancien Regime. Indeed, it might be argued that Louis XV's reign was much more prone to it. Marie Antoinette was therefore nothing new
- increasing financial crisis and the inability to arrive at a solution proved to damage royal authority in a very public manner
- the rise of faction at court was the culmination of factional rivalries that existed long before Marie Antoinette
- the failure of the nobility to cooperate in the Assembly of Notables made it even more difficult for Louis to assert his authority in the run up to revolution
- the very character of Louis XVI might be considered crucial. His gradual retreat from public life, after his equally damaging 'desire to be loved' seriously weakened the institution of monarchy.

Question 3

- 03** 'The financial weakness of the Crown in the years 1743 to 1789 was due to the inadequacies of the finance ministers.'
Assess the validity of this view.

[45 marks]*Target: AO1(a), AO1(b), AO2(b)***Generic Mark Scheme for essays at A2**

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Students will need to assess/identify and evaluate/explain the role of the finance ministers and balance this against other factors. They may refer to specific Controller Generals in the response. Indeed, it might be expected that there is knowledge of at least a few of the more well known finance ministers and that the better answers move beyond generic summary of the ministers as a whole.

Students may refer to some of the following material in support of the premise:

- the efforts of many failed due to over ambition and a certain naivety. Machault's attempt to abolish the tithe and replace with a Vingtième predictably failed due to opposition from both the clergy and the magistrates. He financed the War of Austrian Succession through loans which plainly added to the weaknesses of the period. Yet there was little that was revolutionary about this reform
- some Controller Generals, such as Laverdy saw the office as an opportunity to enrich themselves and proved willing to replenish the royal treasury through any possible means. Longevity in office necessitated a policy of keeping an even keel and not suggesting substantial reform
- Necker's Compte Rendu may be viewed as an example of self-promotion and wilful neglect of the state of the royal finances. This was a clear attempt to avoid reform
- Calonne's misguided policy of seeking taxation through the Assembly of the Notables might be considered the very spark for the collapse of the ancien regime. The fact he fled France does nothing to challenge this view. Yet here again there was little that smacked of a serious attempt at reforming the fundamental problems of French finances.

Nevertheless, there are a number of other factors to consider:

- Orry successfully stabilised finances at the opening of the period. The dixième had been re-established and trade promoted in Canada and also the Indies
- Silhouette developed a sound measure of melting down the gold and silver ware of the realm to balance the budgets of the 1760s. His introduction of the General Subvention was also of sound principle and is an underestimated reform of the period
- some Controller Generals such as Bertin can be credited with re-energising whole areas of industry. In Bertin's case, agriculture. That he did not achieve more was due to opposition from Parlement
- it was not simply the ideology that finance ministers sought to revise. Terray did much to reform the collection of taxes. Indeed, it was opposition to the more efficient taxation system that led Maupeou in part to the actions of 1771.

Furthermore, students may argue other factors were far more important:

- the lack of support from the Crown was notable. For example, Turgot's fall was not only dramatic but was disastrous for the state of royal finances. His efforts at economic liberalism and physiocratic ideology required more than tepid support from the monarch
- most students will judge the role of war to be significant. If Turgot was correct and the first shot of the American War spelt bankruptcy for France then this adds to the argument that

- factors other than finance ministers are to blame. This was a war of revenge for the defeats suffered during the Seven Years War. There was no financial planning to it at all
- the failure may be in part the ministers but ultimately they were fighting against a regime reluctant to reform. There was too much vested interest, especially from the magistrates to contemplate fundamental reform.

Converting marks into UMS marks

Convert raw marks into marks on the Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) by using the link below.

UMS conversion calculator: www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion