

A-LEVEL HISTORY

Unit HIS3C: The Emergence of a Great Power? Spain, 1492–1556
Mark scheme

2041
June 2014

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 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 2014

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

HIS3C: The Emergence of a Great Power? Spain, 1492–1556

Question 1

- 01** ‘Ferdinand and Isabella were very effective in dealing with internal challenges to the authority of the crown.’
Assess the validity of this view with reference to the years 1492 to 1516. **[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 identify and explain in what ways and how successfully Ferdinand and Isabella were able to overcome the internal challenges to the authority of the Crown. Note that the end date, 1516, comes 12 years after the death of Isabella. This may mean that many answers are mostly focused on the joint sovereigns to 1504 – such answers should not be regarded as unbalanced. Other answers, however, may deal with the actions of Ferdinand as sole ruler after 1504; or use developments after 1504 to evaluate the degree of success of the policies and actions of the joint sovereigns. Any and all of these approaches are valid. The main requirement is for an argued answer that identifies a range of ‘internal challenges’ and assesses the extent to which they were ‘effectively’ dealt with.

There were numerous challenges and we should not expect answers to be comprehensive. The possibilities include: taming the nobility by reclaiming royal lands and destroying castles; dealing with the military orders, maintaining law and order; dealing with Church (through royal appointments); ensuring religious unity (including the expulsions of Jews and Moors); raising finance from reluctant taxpayers; managing the Cortes in Castile and Aragon.

Some of the policies employed in dealing with these challenges might include: peripatetic government through the royal progress; Isabella’s personal insistence on the ‘absolute’ power of the Crown; careful steps to reinforce joint rule of the two sovereigns by royal propaganda; the role of the Inquisition and the influence of Cisneros. (Several of these aspects, especially the military orders and the Inquisition, can be used to suggest that Ferdinand and Isabella were ruthless as well as effective in exerting authority.)

*** NB Answers may well deploy evidence from before 1492. Such material may indeed be valid if linked to developments from 1492 on – but extensive background description will be of little value.

Students may refer to some of the following to support the view that internal challenges to royal authority were effectively dealt with:

- Ferdinand and Isabella gained great prestige by the Conquest of Granada and strengthened royal control of the Church. With the help of the Inquisition religious unity was much strengthened by 1516
- Isabella used the term ‘absolute power’ on numerous occasions. She did not need to call the Castilian Cortes for 20 years after 1480
- new institutions, such as the Royal Council and the *letrados* were established
- the *Hermidad* was successful in strengthening law and order
- the nobility was tamed and there were no significant revolts
- after Isabella died in 1504. Ferdinand ruling on his own actually had stronger control in Castile than in Aragon. There was no ‘dip’ in royal authority.

Evidence to challenge this view might include:

- the expulsions of Jews and Moors had many negative consequences. The ending of *convivienca* weakened rather than strengthened acceptance of royal authority
- the nobility still had extensive power and influence. It has been claimed that it was only the divisions within the nobility that enabled royal authority to seem dominant, not the fact that the nobility was 'tamed' by Crown policies
- throughout the period Ferdinand struggled to impose authority on the Cortes in Aragon
- the revolts of the early 1520s proved that the establishment of royal authority by 1516 was not complete.

Question 2

- 02** 'The most important changes in the Spanish economy in the years 1492 to 1529 were caused by the discovery of America.'
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.

This breadth question is focused on the financial and economic developments in Spain over the period – it is not a question about the discovery of America! Students will need to provide a balanced evaluation of the various factors influencing finance and the economy, with special reference to the impact of the discovery of America. Many answers are likely to argue that the discovery of America was *not* a decisive influence and that other factors were more important. Such answers may deploy relatively little detail on the American aspect. This is a valid approach as long as the question is addressed adequately. Note also that the question covers a wide timescale; we should not require answers to provide comprehensive detail on all aspects.

Students may refer to some of the following to support the view that the impact (positive and/or negative) of the discovery of America had major influence on finance and the economy:

- Columbus aroused lavish expectations when he returned from his first voyage with talk of gold and new lands but Spain's Caribbean possessions were an expensive and unproductive burden for 25 years until the conquest of Mexico
- Spain then gained massive wealth and prestige from the inflow of gold and silver from Mexico and Peru, especially after the discovery of the Potosi 'silver mountain'
- New World bullion often flowed through or past Spain to foreign bankers, leading to a massive financial debt and royal bankruptcies
- New World bullion was imported in such vast quantities that it caused runaway inflation
- the American empire was massively expensive to run; it also emphasised landholding and the exploitation of conquest, which distorted the 'real' economy.

There is a range of evidence to support the view other factors were more important:

- the key to the financial situation was within Spain, especially the financial policies of the monarchs
- the shaping of the Spanish economy was influenced more heavily by such factors as the negative effects of the expulsion of the Jews and by the Mesta than any effects from the American empire
- the traditional view that inflation was primarily caused by New World bullion has been disputed by modern historians
- the biggest problems for finance and the economy came from Charles V's role as Holy Roman Emperor and the vast burdens of his European wars.

Question 3

- 03** 'The government of Spain in the years 1529 to 1556 worked well despite the fact that Charles I was an "absentee" monarch.'
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**
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Indicative content

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The focus of this question is on Spain in the years 1529 to 1556, years when Charles held dual power as King of Spain and Holy Roman Emperor. At this time, Charles was largely an absentee monarch, deeply involved with his struggles against Protestantism and the Turks. From 1529 Spain was ruled by a succession of regents, most importantly by the young Prince Philip (assisted at first by Cardinal Tavera). Answers should provide a balanced assessment of the extent to which Charles' lengthy absences weakened royal government; and of the effectiveness of his regents. (Note that the key quotation takes it as a given that Charles was indeed an "absentee" monarch. Some students may well challenge this assumption, pointing out that there were periods when he WAS in Spain. This is worthy of credit, showing depth of definition and differentiation; but it is **not** a requirement for a high-level response).

Evidence to support the view government 'worked well' might include:

- Charles was rarely in Spain – only six years of the 20 years from 1535. His absences were unpopular with the people and without effective Spanish regents his authority could have collapsed completely. It didn't
- royal government coped with the huge cost burdens in running the American empire and fighting expensive wars in Europe and the Mediterranean
- Philip and the Regency Council succeeded in keeping political control, especially from 1543. There was a strong system of government in Spain and the regency was fronted by Spanish regents who appointed mostly Spaniards to court positions
- even from a young age, Philip (known as 'Il Prudente') was a capable administrator. Philip could also rely on the efficiency and authority of Los Cobos.

Nevertheless, there are opposing arguments – that Spain was not really saved from failures in this period:

- there were growing conflicts between the Crown and the Cortes
- Philip's regency failed miserably in finance, especially taxation
- the 1540s and 1550s were marked by inflation and bankruptcy. This was at least partly due to the cost of Charles' imperial ambitions and constant wars
- the reign ended with an abdication crisis. This proves that royal government did not always 'work well'.

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