

# A-LEVEL HISTORY

Unit HIS3L: From Defeat to Unity: Germany, 1945–1991  
Mark scheme

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Version 1.0: Final

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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](http://aqa.org.uk)

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## 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.

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

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**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

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

**HIS3L: From Defeat to Unity: Germany, 1945–1991**

**Question 1**

- 01** ‘The emergence of a separate East German state in the years 1945 to 1949 was entirely due to the provocative actions of the Western occupying powers.’  
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 identify and explain the various factors that led to the emergence of the GDR as a separate state by 1949. The question focuses on the actions of the Western occupying powers – provoking a response from the USSR and the East German Communists. Many answers will challenge this view and will pin the blame on Stalin and the USSR, deploying plentiful evidence about Stalin's 'game plan' to secure influence over Germany and eastern Europe and his motives for blockading Berlin in 1948; but there were also important actions by the Western powers contributing to the division of Germany, such as currency reform and establishing 'Bizonia', and by the firm response to the Berlin Blockade. Then again, candidates may well refer to 'other' factors, especially the role of Walter Ulbricht and the 'Ulbricht Group' but also the actions of German politicians in the western zones leading up to the 1949 Basic Law.

Students may refer to some of the following in support of the argument that the Western occupying powers were the driving force behind the emergence of the GDR:

- Germany was a political vacuum in 1945. No German politicians had credibility or influence and it was the Allied Control Commission that took the vital decisions
- differing policies of the occupying powers towards reparations brought about major differences between East and West in Germany. The West failed to understand the Soviet attitude to reparations
- the western powers alienated the USSR by bullying tactics (nuclear weapons) and using economic power (rationing, creation of 'Bizonia' and the Marshall Plan). This forced Stalin into trying to maximise Soviet control over Berlin.

Evidence to challenge this view, pointing to the importance of Stalin and the USSR and other factors, might include:

- Stalin had a deliberate policy to bring about Soviet domination of a united Germany but he miscalculated. This resulted in the Berlin Blockade which led directly to the de facto division of Germany
- Stalin called the shots in setting the policies of the Communist Bloc. The Ulbricht Group were merely political puppets dependent upon Soviet power and backing (during the Berlin Blockade, for example)
- the decisive factor was the leadership of Walter Ulbricht. The Ulbricht Group was deeply involved from the beginning – already trained for the task inside the USSR before 1945. Ulbricht was a skilful leader with consistent aims who knew what was possible, politically
- Ulbricht played a key role in the rise of the SED, the infiltration of the trade unions and the intimidation of potential opponents
- German politicians in the West had important influence on Allied policies
- the state of Germany in 1945 – the complete ruination of the country and the presence of occupying armies in the heart of Germany – made division all but certain. It was above all Hitler's legacy that created the conditions for division.

**Question 2**

- 02** 'The spectacular growth of the West German economy in the years 1949 to 1963 was due above all to Ludwig Erhard.'  
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**
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- 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**
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Students will need to provide a balanced evaluation of the factors contributing to the ‘economic miracle’ of the 1950s. Many answers will agree with the key quotation, assembling detailed evidence in support of the contention that Ludwig Erhard was indeed the architect of economic success. Such evidence might include:

- Erhard was a highly-qualified economist who had already gained great experience in running economic affairs under the Allied occupation from 1945
- Erhard’s so-called Social Market economy was brilliantly adapted to the economic needs of the time. West Germany achieved levels of employer-worker cooperation that were far in advance of rival economies such as Britain or Italy
- Erhard was successful partly through sheer continuity – he was in post long enough for his policies to be thoroughly embedded
- he was an effective operator within Adenauer’s government partly because of his own skills and the political popularity that came with his amiable ‘Rubber Lion’ personality
- his Investment Aid Law was an efficient way of linking state resources to the free business economy.

Nevertheless, there is a range of arguments to support the view that other factors were more important than Erhard and his policies. Evidence of these factors might include:

- the real key was stable political leadership of Konrad Adenauer. Erhard found Adenauer a difficult and frustrating leader to deal with but it can be argued Erhard depended entirely upon Adenauer’s ability to dominate West German politics
- Adenauer was also extremely clever at ‘playing the Cold War card’. The West German economy benefited hugely from American aid and American political backing
- from 1950 West Germany also benefited from the Schuman Plan and moves towards European economic integration
- West Germany also benefited from aspects of the Nazi legacy. One factor was the range of administrative measures introduced by Albert Speer when he ran the war economy from 1942 to 1945 – another was the fact that the aftermath of Nazism left workers wanting a quiet life and very willing to avoid strikes and industrial unrest
- Germany was thoroughly demilitarised after 1945 and barred from military spending; Britain, spent about 7 per cent of GDP per year on defence spending and suffered economically
- the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950 led to a surge in demand just at the right time to boost West German factory output and stimulate growth.

Some students may put forward differentiated assessments suggesting perhaps that the economic growth of the 1950s was not so ‘spectacular’ as all that. Such arguments could indeed enhance a good answer but this approach is by no means a requirement for high-level responses.



**Question 3**

- 03** 'It was only the Berlin Wall that enabled the GDR to survive as long as it did.'  
Assess the validity of this view with reference to the years 1955 to 1989.

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

Nothing written worthy of credit. **0**

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**\*\*\* This is a ‘breadth’ question and the depth of specific evidence should be judged accordingly. It is to be expected that there may be slightly less analytical detail than in narrower, ‘depth’ questions – the key requirement is synoptic grasp of the issues over the whole timescale of the question.**

Students will need to analyse the impact of the Berlin Wall during its 28 years of existence and to reach a balanced evaluation of its importance for the survival of the GDR. There should be a clear focus on the key dates, 1955 represents a key moment in the division of Germany, when the Cold War divisions were reinforced by the formation of the Warsaw Pact and the ‘economic miracle’ in West Germany began to attract many skilled and youthful East Germans into escaping to a presumed better life on the other side of the Iron Curtain. In the late 1950s the GDR faced a major crisis in the emigration of its younger and more skilled citizens. 1989 represents the fall of the Wall – and it also marks the point at which westward migration and the depopulation of the eastern parts of Germany began again, which could be used to assess the importance of the Wall.

\*\*\* Since the Berlin Wall is at the heart of the question it will be legitimate for answers to focus on 1961–1989 but more effective answers will place the story of the Wall in the context of the growing crisis before 1961 that caused the Wall to be built.

Many answers are likely to disagree that the Wall was very important.

Evidence to support this view might include:

- the GDR faced an impossible problem when the economic situation in East and West was diverging so rapidly. Mass emigration of skilled workers and energetic young people was a mounting crisis by the late 1950s. It had to be stopped
- the economic disparity was stimulated artificially by Western policies that were deliberately designed to tempt GDR citizens into migrating – and the Western ‘economic miracle’ came about partly because so many skilled workers were obtained this way. The East had to act
- from 1961 the Cold War in Europe calmed down considerably. Stability over the Berlin Question enabled stability within the GDR. From 1961 and especially in the 1970s, the GDR had many social and economic successes (the ‘niche society’) that would not have been possible without the Wall
- the Wall was an essential component of improving relations between the Two Germanies in the 1970s and 1980s; Willy Brandt’s *Ostpolitik* would otherwise have been impossible
- after 1989, the consequences of the end of the Wall (resumed migration out of the East, the collapse of the GDR and the USSR) showed how effectively the Wall had prevented such things from happening.

On the other hand, there will indeed be answers disagreeing with the central proposition that the Wall was the key factor. They might argue for example that the Wall had harmful consequences for East Germany and that the survival of the GDR was due to other factors.

Points might include:

- the Wall had a terrible human cost in separating families and in trapping East Germans in their 'Stasiland' prison camp for a generation
- the possibility of negotiations leading towards unity was snuffed out
- the Wall was a confession of failure by Ulbricht's GDR
- there was no longer any real chance of reform from within in the GDR
- the survival of the East was due to many other factors that had little to do with the Wall. Both Ulbricht and Honecker were skilful political operators; the Stasi was a nasty but highly effective source of stability and control; the social policies of the GDR and its 'niche society' meant that many East German citizens were grateful for the benefits in education and welfare
- the GDR survived as long as the USSR backed it. The 'Gorbachev Revolution' meant the end of the GDR, Wall or no Wall.

### **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](http://www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion)