



Oxford Cambridge and RSA

**GCE**

**History A**

**Y253/01: Non-British period study: The Cold War in Europe  
1941-1995**

AS Level

**Mark Scheme for June 2023**

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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  
SCORIS**

1. Make sure that you have accessed and completed the relevant training packages for on-screen marking: *scoris 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 posted on the RM Cambridge Assessment Support Portal <http://www.rm.com/support/ca>
3. Log-in to scoris and mark the **required number** of practice responses (“scripts”) and the **number of required** standardisation responses.

YOU MUST MARK 5 PRACTICE AND 6 STANDARDISATION RESPONSES BEFORE YOU CAN BE APPROVED TO MARK LIVE SCRIPTS.

**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 scoris 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 scoris 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. Award No Response (NR) if:
  - there is nothing written in the answer space

Award Zero '0' if:


- anything is written in the answer space and is not worthy of credit (this includes text and symbols).

Team Leaders must confirm the correct use of the NR button with their markers before live marking commences and should check this when reviewing scripts.

8. The scoris **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 scoris 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: Not applicable in F501
  - 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 of annotation
<b>BP</b>	Blank Page
	Highlight
Off-page comment	
<b>A</b>	Assertion
<b>AN</b>	Analysis
<b>EVAL</b>	Evaluation
<b>EXP</b>	Explanation
<b>F</b>	Factor
<b>ILL</b>	Illustrates/Describes
<b>IRRL</b>	Irrelevant, a significant amount of material that does not answer the question
<b>J</b>	Judgement
<b>KU</b>	Knowledge and understanding
<b>P</b>	Provenance
<b>SC</b>	Simple comment
	Unclear
<b>V</b>	View

## 12. Subject Specific Marking Instructions

Question	Answer	Mark	Guidance
1*	<p><b>‘Of all the Grand Alliance leaders, Stalin contributed most to wartime tensions.’ How far do you agree?</b></p> <p><b>In arguing that Stalin contributed most to wartime tensions, answers might consider:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stalin’s deep distrust of the West determination to create a buffer zone</li> <li>• Stalin’s insistence on the payment of reparations to Russia to compensate for massive wartime losses.</li> <li>• Stalin’s abandonment of Warsaw in 1944.</li> <li>• Stalin’s demands re Poland’s borders.</li> <li>• Stalin’s reneging on promises at Yalta re. free elections – creation of Government of National Unity in Poland; rigging of Romanian elections.</li> <li>• Stalin’s determination to keep Germany weak and divided clashed with US plans</li> </ul> <p><b>In arguing that other leaders contributed to wartime tensions, answers might consider:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Churchill and Roosevelt’s opposition at Tehran to Stalin’s demands for reparations.</li> <li>• Failure of American presidents and UK prime ministers to endorse the Oder-Neisse Line.</li> <li>• The delay in the opening of the Second Front enhanced Stalin’s suspicions.</li> <li>• Lend-Lease raised some suspicions that the USA was using the USSR to do their fighting</li> <li>• America’s development of the atom bomb. was of great concern to Stalin.</li> <li>• A harder-line towards Stalin was taken by Truman and Atlee than their predecessors.</li> </ul>	30	<p>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.</p> <p><b><u>Neither significance nor relative importance are attributed to the features listed.</u></b></p> <p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No set answer is expected.</li> <li>• At Level 5 there will be a judgement about the significance Stalin’s contribution to wartime tensions.</li> <li>• At Level 5 answers might establish criteria against which to judge his contribution.</li> <li>• To be valid, judgements must be supported by relevant and accurate material. If not, they are assertions.</li> <li>• 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 mark scheme.</li> </ul>

Question		Answer	Mark	Guidance
2*		<p><b>'War in Afghanistan was the main reason for the end of the Cold War.'</b> How far do you agree?</p> <p><b>In arguing that Afghanistan was the main reason, answers might consider:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It undermined confidence in détente and led to an unsustainable arms race for the USSR.</li> <li>• Islamic radicalism in Afghanistan threatened the stability of other parts of the USSR.</li> <li>• It was a severe drain on Soviet resources and contributed to domestic problems.</li> <li>• Lack of success undermined confidence in the Soviet regime.</li> <li>• Soviet military strategies in Afghanistan (e.g. bombing) strengthened opposition abroad.</li> <li>• High number of Soviet troops wounded or killed added to opposition at home.</li> </ul> <p><b>In arguing that Afghanistan was not the main reason, answers might consider:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The role of Reagan &amp; Thatcher's in putting pressure on USSR.</li> <li>• Economic hardships in the USSR: Soviet economy was in trouble by 1990.</li> <li>• Diminishing of the ideological stance upon which the Soviet bloc had been based.</li> <li>• Gorbachev (perestroika, glasnost, reunification of Germany) contributed.</li> <li>• Social inequalities (e.g. special shops for party elite) added to calls for regime change.</li> <li>• The causes and consequences of the 'velvet' revolutions of 1989.</li> <li>• Independence movements in the Baltic, Ukraine, Georgia contributed.</li> </ul>	30	<p>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.</p> <p><b><u>Neither significance nor relative importance are attributed to the features listed.</u></b></p> <p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No set answer is expected.</li> <li>• At Level 5 there will be a judgement as to the extent to which war in Afghanistan caused the ending of the Cold War.</li> <li>• At Level 5 answers might establish criteria against which to judge the significance of the war.</li> <li>• To be valid, judgements must be supported by relevant and accurate material. If not, they are assertions.</li> <li>• 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 mark scheme.</li> </ul>



Question		Answer	Mark	Guidance
3		<p><b>Read the interpretation and then answer the question that follows:</b></p> <p><b>‘To observers of Europe in 1945 it must have seemed clear that the war had created conditions that made great power conflict highly likely, if not inevitable.’</b></p> <p><b>Adapted from: R. J. McMahon, The Cold War published in 2003.</b></p> <p><b>Evaluate the strengths and limitations of this interpretation, making reference to other interpretations that you have studied.</b></p> <p>The historical debate centres on the extent to which the condition in Europe by 1945 made further conflict between the Great Powers likely.</p> <p>In analysing and evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the interpretation, answers might suggest there were reasons for observers of Europe in 1945 to be optimistic.</p> <p><b>In analysing and evaluating the strengths of the given interpretation,</b> answers might use knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The creation of power vacuums by the collapse of regimes.</li> <li>• Soviet demands for compensation / reparations / revenge in response to the damage suffered during the war.</li> </ul>	30	<p>The indicative content lists features of the period studied that relate to the question set.</p> <p><b><u>Neither significance nor relative importance are attributed to the features listed.</u></b></p> <p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No set answer is expected.</li> <li>• Candidates must use their knowledge and understanding of the historical context and the wider historical debate surrounding the issue to analyse and evaluate the given interpretation.</li> <li>• Candidates must refer to at least one other interpretation.</li> <li>• The quality of analysis and evaluation of the interpretations should be considered when assigning answers to a level, not the quantity of other interpretations used in the answer.</li> <li>• Other interpretations considered as part of evaluation and analysis do not need to be attributed to specific named historians, but they must be recognisable historical interpretations, rather than the candidate’s own viewpoint.</li> <li>• Answers may include more on strengths or more on limitations and there is no requirement for a 50/50 split in the evaluation, however for level 5 there should be well supported evaluation of both and for level 4 supported evaluation of both, in line with levels descriptors.</li> <li>• Candidates are not required to construct their own interpretation.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soviet occupation of eastern territories.</li> <li>• Unresolved issues regarding divisions in Germany (especially Berlin) and the creation of a buffer zone.</li> <li>• Tensions regarding the West's refusal to endorse the Oder-Neisse Line.</li> <li>• Heightened levels of distrust, fear, and resentment across Europe and also in Soviet-American relations.</li> <li>• The loss of a common enemy which had bridged the ideological gap between East and West.</li> </ul> <p><b>In analysing and evaluating the weaknesses of the given interpretation</b>, answers might use knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confidence in the power of diplomacy and conferences to maintain the working relationship of the wartime allies.</li> <li>• The conciliatory approach of certain key players (notably Roosevelt and Churchill).</li> <li>• Evidence of the capacity for compromise and agreement (e.g. the reparations issue at Yalta; regarding the future of Germany at Potsdam).</li> <li>• Confidence in the commitment of the USA to help rebuild Europe economically.</li> <li>• Confidence in the military strength of the USA to keep the peace (e.g. air bases in Europe; atomic arsenal).</li> <li>• Confidence in the UN in maintaining future world peace.</li> <li>• Confidence in the potential of the newly created International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.</li> </ul>		
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		<p><b>Other interpretations that might be used in evaluation of the given interpretation are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interpretations which stress long-standing ideological and historical factors in the conflict between the capitalist West and the Communist East.</li><li>• Interpretations which stress the role of individuals and the importance of personalities (e.g. Stalin and Truman).</li><li>• Interpretations that argue Cold War was inevitable before the end of the Second World War, due to the tensions over issues like the delay in opening the Second Front.</li></ul>		
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APPENDIX 1 – this contains a generic mark scheme grid

	<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>
	<b>Generic mark scheme for Section A, Questions 1 and 2: Essay [30]</b>
<b>Level 5</b> 25–30 marks	There is a mostly consistent focus on the question. Generally accurate and detailed knowledge and understanding is demonstrated through most of the answer and is evaluated and analysed in order to reach substantiated judgements, but these are not consistently well-developed. There is a well-developed line of reasoning which is clear and logically structured. The information presented is relevant and in
<b>Level 4</b> 19–24 marks	The question is generally addressed. Generally accurate and sometimes detailed knowledge and understanding is demonstrated through most of the answer with evaluation and some analysis, and this is used appropriately to support the judgements that are made. There is a line of reasoning presented with some structure. The information presented is in the most-part relevant and supported by some evidence.
<b>Level 3</b> 13–18 marks	The question is partially addressed. There is demonstration of some relevant knowledge and understanding, which is evaluated and analysed in parts of the answer, but in places knowledge is imparted rather than being used. The analysis is appropriately linked to the judgements made, though the way in which it supports the judgements may not always be made explicit.
<b>Level 2</b> 7–12 marks	The focus is more on the topic than the specific demands of the question. Knowledge and understanding is limited and not well used, with only limited evaluation and analysis, which is only sometimes linked appropriately to the judgements made. 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.
<b>Level 1</b> 1–6 marks	The answer relates to the topic but not the specific question. The answer contains only very limited relevant knowledge which is evaluated and analysed in a very limited way. Judgements are unsupported and are not linked to analysis. Relevant knowledge is limited, generalised and poorly used; attempts at argument are no more than assertion. Information presented is basic and may be ambiguous or unstructured. The information is supported by limited evidence.
0 marks	No evidence of understanding and no demonstration of any relevant knowledge.

	<i>AO3: Analyse and evaluate, in relation to the historical context, different ways in which aspects of the past have been interpreted.</i>
	<b>Generic mark scheme for Section B, Question 3: Interpretation [20]</b>
<b>Level 5</b> 17–20 marks	The answer has a very good analysis of the interpretation. It uses detailed and relevant knowledge of the historical context and shows thorough understanding of the wider historical debate, in the form of detailed examination of other interpretations, in order to produce a well-supported evaluation of both the strengths and weaknesses of the given interpretation.
<b>Level 4</b> 13–16 marks	The answer has a good analysis of the interpretation. It uses relevant knowledge of the historical context and good understanding of the wider historical debate, in the form of examination of other interpretations, in order to produce a supported evaluation of both the strengths and weaknesses of the given interpretation.
<b>Level 3</b> 9–12 marks	The answer has a partial analysis of the interpretation. It uses some relevant knowledge of the historical context and shows partial understanding of the wider historical debate, in the form of reference to other interpretations, in order to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the given interpretation. The evaluation may be un-even with only limited treatment of either limitations or strengths, <b>but both will be addressed.</b>
<b>Level 2</b> 5–8 marks	The answer has a limited analysis of the interpretation. It uses generalised knowledge of the historical context and shows limited understanding of the wider historical debate, in the form of generalised reference to other interpretations, in order to produce a limited evaluation of the given interpretation. The evaluation may deal with either strengths or limitations in a very superficial way, or <b>may only address limitations or strengths.</b>
<b>Level 1</b> 1–4 marks	The answer has a very limited analysis of the interpretation which may be descriptive and relate more to the topic area than the detail of the interpretation. It uses very limited and generalised knowledge of the historical context and shows very limited or no understanding of the wider historical debate, with reference to other interpretations being implicit or lacking, in order to produce a very simplistic, asserted evaluation of the given interpretation.
0 marks	No evidence of understanding or reference to the interpretation.

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