



A-level HISTORY

Paper 2B The Wars of the Roses, 1450–1499

Mark scheme

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.

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A-level History Paper 2 Specimen Mark Scheme

2B The Wars of the Roses, 1450–1499

Section A

- | | | | |
|----------|----------|---|-------------------|
| 0 | 1 | With reference to these sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying the usurpation of Richard III. | [30 marks] |
|----------|----------|---|-------------------|

Target: AO2

Analyse and evaluate appropriate source material, primary and/or contemporary to the period, within the historical context.

Generic Mark Scheme

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|------------|---|--------------|
| L5: | Shows a very good understanding of all three sources in relation to both content and provenance and combines this with a strong awareness of the historical context to present a balanced argument on their value for the particular purpose given in the question. The answer will convey a substantiated judgement. The response demonstrates a very good understanding of context. | 25-30 |
| L4: | Shows a good understanding of all three sources in relation to both content and provenance and combines this with an awareness of the historical context to provide a balanced argument on their value for the particular purpose given in the question. Judgements may, however, be partial or limited in substantiation. The response demonstrates a good understanding of context. | 19-24 |
| L3: | Shows some understanding of all three sources in relation to both content and provenance together with some awareness of the historical context. There may, however, be some imbalance in the degree of breadth and depth of comment offered on all three sources and the analysis may not be fully convincing. The answer will make some attempt to consider the value of the sources for the particular purpose given in the question. The response demonstrates an understanding of context. | 13-18 |
| L2: | The answer will be partial. It may, for example, provide some comment on the value of the sources for the particular purpose given in the question but only address one or two of the sources, or focus exclusively on content (or provenance), or it may consider all three sources but fail to address the value of the sources for the particular purpose given in the question. The response demonstrates some understanding of context. | 7-12 |
| L1: | The answer will offer some comment on the value of at least one source in relation to the purpose given in the question but the response will be limited and may be partially inaccurate. Comments are likely to be unsupported, vague or generalist. The response demonstrates limited understanding of context. | 1-6 |
| | Nothing worthy of credit. | 0 |

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 must deploy knowledge of the historical context to show an understanding of the relationship between the sources and the issues raised in the question, when assessing the significance of provenance, the arguments deployed in the sources and the tone and emphasis of the sources. Descriptive answers which fail to do this should be awarded no more than Level 2 at best. Answers should address both the value and the limitations of the sources for the particular question and purpose given.

In responding to this question, students may choose to respond to each source in turn, or to adopt a more comparative approach. For example, they may argue divide the rule into various aspects such as the attempt to establish authority; control of faction; rule of the provinces. Either approach could be equally valid, and what follows is indicative of the evaluation which may be relevant.

Source A: In assessing the value of this source, students may refer to the following:

Provenance

- comments might be broadly positive in that it is a source by a named author who claimed to have witnessed the events
- however, it is unclear exactly how an Italian may have been able to acquire such an intimate knowledge of the events of the usurpation and the objective of his publication.

Content and argument

- the source has a useful and clear focus on the attempts of Richard to establish authority
- there is a suggestion at the opening that the motivation was greed and lust for power, but this is then balanced by the suggestion that familial love was a motivation and also the desire for revenge
- fear of Richard becomes a reason for the ease with which he usurped the throne, although contextual knowledge might well suggest that the usurpation was far from as straightforward as suggested here.

Tone and emphasis

- the source is presented in the manner of a factual, even chronological, account of events. There is relatively little commentary of either a positive or of a negative nature.

Source B: In assessing the value of this source, students may refer to the following:

Provenance

- A History of London will be viewed as rather blinkered by some. Events interpreted from the perspective of a merchant in the city might be considered especially narrow

in the circumstance of Richard's usurpation and his powerbase in the North.

Content and argument

- the source gives the impression of a much wider basis of support for the usurpation and indeed suggests a certain legality to it
- there is no reference to the imprisonment of the young princes but simply that they were found not to be the rightful heirs
- that Richard demanded judges implement fair and just law implies that Richard cares for the welfare of his subjects and that he is fulfilling the traditional role of kingship
- the image here is not of an avaricious or vengeful individual, as presented in the other sources, but rather of a man doing service
- unlike the other sources, there is little explicit reference to motivation. This refers to the mechanics of the usurpation.

Tone and emphasis

- the controlled and measured use of language and almost complete absence of emotive tone, suggests that the usurpation was a controlled and planned event
- there is no reference to opposition nor to popular reaction. As a chronicler's record of events this appears to stand as an objective account of events.

Source C: In assessing the value of this source, students may refer to the following:

Provenance

- provenance is especially relevant here. Students might comment on the changing interpretation of Richard's reign by Rous and how this affects the utility and reliability of the text
- Rous' position as a churchman might be deemed worthy of comment, especially considering Richard's endowment of church benefices; however, more might be made of the general nature of a history of the English monarchs
- contextual knowledge may make much of the period in which the text was written.

Content and argument

- the nature of Richard's rule is especially useful in this context, with obvious opportunity for students to develop the notion of political assassination and also the validity of the charges laid against Richard as monarch
- the source broadens out the evidence against Richard, suggesting that the killing of the princes was his personal decision and that this was entirely in line with Richard's method of political rule
- the usurpation is interpreted as a feature of the personality and character flaws of a deeply suspect individual
- there is clear focus on motivation rather than method in this source.

Tone and emphasis

- the obviously emotive style of the source, combined with reference to personal and clearly exaggerated personal features, should be identified as an example of less than reliable opinion.

Section B

0 2 'The ambition of Richard Duke of York was the main reason for instability in England in the years 1450 to 1461.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

Target: 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.

Generic Mark Scheme

- L5:** Answers will display a very good understanding of the full demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively delivered. The supporting information will be well-selected, specific and precise. It will show a very good understanding of key features, issues and concepts. The answer will be fully analytical with a balanced argument and well-substantiated judgement. **21-25**
- L4:** Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. It will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment relating to the question. The answer will be well-balanced with some judgement, which may, however, be only partially substantiated. **16-20**
- L3:** Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features, but may, however, be unspecific or lack precision of detail. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be a good deal of comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance, but a number of statements may be inadequately supported and generalist. **11-15**
- L2:** The answer is descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. **6-10**
- L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1-5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

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.

The widespread dissatisfaction with Lancastrian rule by the 1450s is the context. War with France and apparent breakdown in law and order was enough to explain this. But it was factionalism under Henry VI that worsened the crisis. The Act of Resumption of 1450 gives further contextual awareness.

Factors that may be used in **favour** of the premise of the question:

- Richard's ambition to be protector, especially in light of factionalism against Somerset, was a clear reason for instability from 1454. Indeed the debate over the appointment of the Archbishop of Canterbury might be seen as a turning point in this regard
- the transitory health of Henry, combined with the machinations of Margaret and Buckingham, did convince Henry VI that York was plotting to take the throne in 1459. Events at Blore Heath might superficially be considered to reinforce this impression
- York famously laying his hands on the empty throne at Westminster Hall adds even further to this impression and supports the premise of the question
- the Act of Accord of 1460 might be interpreted as the legal culmination of York's ambition
- Towton can be seen as the military complement to this dynastic victory after years of factional instability.

Factors that may be used to **challenge** the premise of the question:

- York's influence up to 1453 might be considered negligible, especially considering his obvious character flaws
- York's return from Ireland in 1450 was probably as much to do with a desire to clear his name as with dynastic ambition
- it was the factionalism at court, and especially the manoeuvring of Somerset that forced York on his path, especially after Somerset's elevation to Captaincy of Calais – this was at least a factor in the rebellion of 1452
- Henry's health is another obvious factor, or perhaps more logically his recovery in 1454
- the suspicions of Henry VI were fuelled by Margaret and it was this that led to the battle of St Albans in 1455
- the Parliament of Devils in 1459 proves the extent to which factionalism was a key element to the instability – such factionalism might not therefore be considered the preserve of just one individual.

0 3 'Edward IV's failure to consolidate his position as king in the years 1461 to 1469 was due to his own mistakes.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

Target: 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.

Generic Mark Scheme

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- L2:** The answer is descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. **6-10**
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- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

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.

There may be some attempt to challenge the question and suggest that Edward did consolidate his position at times. Hence, although his authority was challenged by both Lancastrians and disaffected Yorkists, he did hold on to the throne. However, there should be a firm focus on his failure to consolidate this position over time, and indeed eventually to lose it at the end of the period.

Factors that may be used in **support** of the premise of the question:

- Edward's policy of conciliation, especially towards Somerset and Percy, was misguided as they were always likely to remain intractable
- the fact rebellion broke out again in 1463 indicates that Edward struggled to contain his rivals and had simply lacked the ability to contain the ambition of others
- Edward's reliance on a very small group of men, and especially the Neville family and of course Hastings, meant that he had a very narrow power base
- the delegation of power under Edward also fractured it and caused deep held resentment from those not privy to power
- patronage was handled very poorly by Edward throughout the period
- one of the greatest mistakes may be interpreted to have been his marriage to Elizabeth Woodville which badly shook confidence in the king's judgment
- Edward's reaction to the threat in 1469 was pedestrian and dilatory, symptomatic of a king that failed to grasp the collapse of support for him.

Factors that may be used to **challenge** the premise of the question:

- it was the ambition of the great families that fundamentally weakened Edward's rule – a factor which he was challenged to do anything about simply because he needed families such as the Nevilles to control the North
- the policy of reconciliation was therefore bred of necessity
- Edward was let down by the very men he elevated to great power
- Warwick's ambition might be considered the real cause of the instability in the period – even Edward's decision to marry Elizabeth may be viewed as part of a widening rift between Edward and Warwick
- Warwick's advocacy of a French alliance, the rise of the Woodvilles and local rising in Yorkshire, all combined with Edward's dilatory approach to undermine the direction and security of the reign and to provide motivation for those with an inherent interest in the collapse of a regime from which they had derived little personal benefit.

0 4 'The baronial wars of 1483 to 1487 brought about surprisingly little change to the social and economic condition of the people of England.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

Target: 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.

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| | Nothing worthy of credit. | 0 |

Indicative content

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Factors that may be used to **support** the premise of the question:

- the period of actual fighting, or indeed of armies marching through communities, was limited. There were no prolonged sieges or even armies spending months in the field
- it is clear that the size of these armies was limited. Richmond's suggestion that only 6 peers fought for Richard III at Bosworth seems a gross underestimate, but of these armies only a fraction of the retained contingent seems to have been utilised anyway
- the peasantry were never themselves called upon to fight and so the impact at the village level might be considered minimal
- towns seemed more interested in merchant activity than in the factionalism that they seemed desperate to avoid. Even York, whilst very supportive of Richard, even creating his son Edward, Prince of Wales in the Minster, only sent 80 men to Bosworth in defence of Richard. Much of the chronicle evidence suggests that York was much more interested in reinforcing its own defences that dangerously throwing in its lot with one side
- there is no evidence that trade in this period was affected negatively
- the elevation of Henry VII might actually be suggested to have brought the sort of financial regulation and close scrutiny over feudal dues that had far more impact than the physical fighting that continued to Stoke.

Factors that may be used to **challenge** the premise of the question:

- Henry VII's clear reluctance to replace magnates in the period 1485 to 1487 – the extinction rate in these two years alone being 42% illustrates a profound social shift in England
- the Baronial Wars may have prompted this overly cautious, indeed ruthless attitude to the nobility and the deep social change that it must have brought to all social levels of English society
- whilst fighting was rare, Bosworth and Stoke can hardly be considered small engagements, and whilst some might have held back from definite alignment to one side or another, it was the actual preparation for war that brought as much social and economic change as anything else
- Henry VII provided £72. 2s. 4d as compensation to communities that had seen their grain pillaged by his army on its way to Bosworth, thus illustrating that pillaging was sustained and had an obvious effect on those communities that it touched
- trade depression towards the end of this period was caused as much by fluctuations in the availability in bullion as by any economic impact brought about by the Baronial Wars
- the consequence of events in the years 1483 to 1485 might conversely have strengthened the position of kingship and led to a worsening in the individual freedoms of the merchant class in the years 1485 to 1487.

