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**GCSE  
HISTORY  
8145/1B/A**

**Paper 1 Section B/A: Conflict and tension: the First World War,  
1894–1918**

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**Mark scheme**

**June 2025**

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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 Examiner.

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.

No student should be disadvantaged on the basis of their gender identity and/or how they refer to the gender identity of others in their exam responses.

A consistent use of 'they/them' as a singular and pronouns beyond 'she/her' or 'he/him' will be credited in exam responses in line with existing mark scheme criteria.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from [aqa.org.uk](http://aqa.org.uk)

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## Level of response marking instructions

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the average performance for the level. There are marks in each level.

Before you apply the mark scheme to a student's answer read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. You can then apply the mark scheme.

### Step 1 Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level. The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, ie if the response is predominantly level 3 with a small amount of level 4 material it would be placed in level 3 but be awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the level 4 content.

### Step 2 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help. There will be an answer in the standardising materials which will correspond with each level of the mark scheme. This answer will have been awarded a mark by the Lead Examiner. You can compare the student's answer with the example to determine if it is the same standard, better or worse than the example. You can then use this to allocate a mark for the answer based on the Lead Examiner's mark on the example.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other valid points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the Indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.

## Step 3 Spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG)

Spelling, punctuation and grammar will be assessed in question 04.

	<b>Performance descriptor</b>	<b>Marks awarded</b>
High performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners spell and punctuate with consistent accuracy</li> <li>• Learners use rules of grammar with effective control of meaning overall</li> <li>• Learners use a wide range of specialist terms as appropriate</li> </ul>	4 marks
Intermediate performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners spell and punctuate with considerable accuracy</li> <li>• Learners use rules of grammar with general control of meaning overall</li> <li>• Learners use a good range of specialist terms as appropriate</li> </ul>	2–3 marks
Threshold performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners spell and punctuate with reasonable accuracy</li> <li>• Learners use rules of grammar with some control of meaning and any errors do not significantly hinder meaning overall</li> <li>• Learners use a limited range of specialist terms as appropriate</li> </ul>	1 mark
No marks awarded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The learner writes nothing</li> <li>• The learner's response does not relate to the question</li> <li>• The learner's achievement in SPaG does not reach the threshold performance level, for example errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar severely hinder meaning</li> </ul>	0 marks

Question 04 is an extended response question. They give students the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to construct and develop a sustained line of reasoning which is coherent, relevant, substantiated and logically structured.

**0 1****Source A** supports the Allies. How do you know?Explain your answer using **Source A** and your contextual knowledge.**[4 marks]**

The indicative content is designed to exemplify the qualities expected at each level and is not a full exemplar answer. All historically relevant and valid answers should be credited.

**Target** **Analyse sources contemporary to the period (AO3a)****Level 2:** **Developed analysis of source based on content and/or provenance** **3–4**

Students may progress from a simple analysis of the source with extended reasoning supported by factual knowledge and understanding related to the features of the source.

For example, the postcard was made in France and is celebrating the successful attack by the British and French in September 1914 which forced the German army to retreat.

**Level 1:** **Simple analysis of source based on content and/or provenance** **1–2**

Students identify relevant features in the source and support them with simple factual knowledge and understanding.

For example, German soldiers are running away from the Allies. The Kaiser looks foolish as he has fallen in the water.

**Students either submit no evidence or fail to address the question** **0**

**0 2** How useful are **Sources B** and **C** to an historian studying the Gallipoli Campaign?

Explain your answer using **Sources B** and **C** and your contextual knowledge.

**[12 marks]**

The indicative content is designed to exemplify the qualities expected at each level and is not a full exemplar answer. All historically relevant and valid answers should be credited.

**Target** **Analyse sources contemporary to the period (AO3a)**  
**Evaluate sources and make substantiated judgements (AO3b)**

In analysing and evaluating sources, students will draw on their contextual knowledge to question critically the content and provenance of sources (for example, the context of the time in which source was created, place, author's situation, knowledge, beliefs, circumstances, access to information, purpose and audience).

**Level 4: Complex evaluation of both sources with sustained judgement based on content and provenance 10–12**

Students may progress from a developed evaluation of the sources by complex reasoning related to utility on the basis of content and provenance. They may evaluate the relationship between the sources based on analysis of provenance and contextual knowledge.

For example, Source B is useful to show an historian how cartoons were used as propaganda to influence and encourage the public's confidence in the outcome of the war. But taken together, the sources show the difference between the strategic aims of the Gallipoli campaign contrasted against the reality of the results.

**Level 3: Developed evaluation of sources based on the content and/or provenance 7–9**

Students may progress from a simple evaluation of the sources with extended reasoning related to utility on the basis of content and/or provenance.

For example, Source B is useful because it shows there was optimism in Britain that the campaign would be successful. The title of the cartoon, 'An important step' refers to the idea that by defeating one of Germany's allies, Turkey, the war on the Western Front would be easier to win. If they had control of the Dardanelles, the Allies could supply Russia and help secure a victory on the Eastern Front. Source C is useful because it reveals how hard the campaign was. The Turks were aware the invasion was coming and attacked from the start. The invading troops could not advance and had to dig trenches to protect themselves.

For example, Source C is a realistic view of Gallipoli because it was written in a private diary and was not intended for a wider audience. The soldiers were outnumbered by the Turks and the losses were huge. ANZAC troops were

gunned down as soon as they left their boats. As the campaign developed there were problems caused by the heat and infected water and so by the end of 1915 it was abandoned, and evacuations began. Source B shows a positive view of campaign because it was printed in a British newspaper in April 1915. There was some success when small boats transported troops from large battleships out at sea to the beaches of Gallipoli.

**Level 2: Simple evaluation of source(s) based on content and/or provenance** 4–6

Students may progress from a basic analysis of the source(s) to simple evaluation of the content and/or provenance.

For example, Source B shows a positive view of campaign because it was printed in a British newspaper in April 1915. There was some success when small boats transported troops from large battleships out at sea to the beaches of Gallipoli.

For example, Source C reveals how hard the campaign was. The Turks were aware the invasion was coming and attacked from the start. The invading troops could not advance and had to dig trenches to protect themselves.

**Level 1: Basic analysis of sources(s)** 1–3

Answers may show understanding/support for one or both sources, but the case is made by assertion/basic inference.

Students identify basic features which are valid about the sources and related to the enquiry point, for example,

Source B shows a British soldier landing in Gallipoli. Turkey and Germany look afraid.

Source C describes how difficult and dangerous it was in Gallipoli.

**Students either submit no evidence or fail to address the question** 0

**0 3**

Write an account of how the First World War was affected by Russia's withdrawal from the fighting.

**[8 marks]**

The indicative content is designed to exemplify the qualities expected at each level and is not a full exemplar answer. All historically relevant and valid answers should be credited.

**Target**

**Explain and analyse historical events and periods studied using second-order concepts (AO2:4)**

**Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key features and characteristics of the period studied (AO1:4)**

**Level 4:**

**Complex analysis of causation/consequence**

**7–8**

**Answer is presented in a coherent narrative/account that demonstrates a range of accurate and detailed knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question**

Extends Level 3.

Students may progress from a developed narrative of causation/consequence with complex sequencing and reasoning supported by a range of accurate and detailed factual knowledge and understanding which might be related, for example, to an analysis of how/why tension increased at different stages and /or showing understanding about how much each part of the sequence increased tension.

For example, although Russia's withdrawal from the fighting brought an immediate advantage to Germany this was short lived. The success of the German Spring Offensive forced the Allies to consider a new strategy and they fought back by unifying their command. The coordination of Allied troops under Foch was effective, and the Allies succeeded in halting the German advance.

**Level 3:**

**Developed analysis of causation/consequence**

**5–6**

**Answer is presented in a structured and well-ordered narrative/account that demonstrates a range of accurate knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question**

Extends Level 2.

Students may progress from a simple narrative of causation/consequence with developed sequencing and reasoning supported by a range of accurate factual knowledge and understanding which might be related, for example to an analysis of how/why tension increased at one stage in the process.

For example, Russia's withdrawal in 1917 worked to Germany's advantage because they could use all their troops to launch Ludendorff's Spring Offensive in 1918. The German army was able to break the stalemate on the Western Front and advanced close enough to fire shells directly at Paris.

<b>Level 2:</b>	<b>Simple analysis of causation/consequence</b>	<b>3–4</b>
	<b>Answer is presented in a structured account that demonstrates specific knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question</b>	

Students may progress from a basic narrative of causation/consequence by showing a simple understanding of sequencing, supporting it with factual knowledge and understanding.

For example, when Russia signed the treaty of Brest-Litovsk, Germany gained farmland and resources from that helped to ease shortages caused by the British blockade.

<b>Level 1:</b>	<b>Basic analysis of causation/consequence</b>	<b>1–2</b>
	<b>Answer is presented as general statements which demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question</b>	

Students identify cause(s)/consequence(s) about the events such as Germany no longer had to fight a war on two fronts.

**Students either submit no evidence or fail to address the question** **0**

Question 04 requires students to produce an extended response. Students should demonstrate their ability to construct and develop a sustained line of reasoning which is coherent, relevant, substantiated and logically structured.

**0 4**

'Kaiser Wilhelm's foreign policy was the main reason for the start of the First World War.'

How far do you agree with this statement?

Explain your answer.

**[16 marks]**  
**[SPaG 4 marks]**

The indicative content is designed to exemplify the qualities expected at each level and is not a full exemplar answer. All historically relevant and valid answers should be credited.

**Target** **Explain and analyse historical events and periods studied using second-order concepts (AO2:8)**  
**Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key features and characteristics of the period studied (AO1:8)**

**Level 4:** **Complex explanation of stated factor and other factor(s) leading to a sustained judgement** **13–16**  
**Answer demonstrates a range of accurate and detailed knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question**  
Answer demonstrates a complex, sustained line of reasoning which has a sharply-focused coherence and logical structure that is fully substantiated, with well-judged relevance.

Extends Level 3.

Students may progress from a developed explanation of causation by complex explanation of the relationship between causes supported by detailed factual knowledge and understanding to form a sustained judgement.

For example, the Kaiser's foreign policy was part of the long-term causes of the war because it contributed to the wider context of European rivalry over empires. The response of other countries to the Kaiser's ambitions, such as when Britain engaged in a naval race to have the most Dreadnoughts, also made war more likely as it created a framework for conflict. This meant that tension was high and peace in Europe was not secure. In the short term, the war was triggered by the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia in 1914.

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<b>Level 3:</b>	<b>Developed explanation of the stated factor and other factor(s)</b> <b>Answer demonstrates a range of accurate knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question</b>	<b>9–12</b>
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Answer demonstrates a developed, sustained line of reasoning which has coherence and logical structure; it is well substantiated, and with sustained, explicit relevance.

Extends Level 2.

Answer may suggest that one reason has greater merit.

Students may progress from a simple explanation of causation with developed reasoning supported by factual knowledge and understanding.

For example, the Kaiser's foreign policy led to the First World War because it created rivalry with other European powers. The Kaiser wanted to build up the German Empire by taking over new colonies. He wanted to make the army and navy much bigger. This led to a naval race between Germany and Britain as they competed to build the most powerful type of warship called dreadnoughts and super dreadnoughts.

For example, the Alliance system was reason for the start of the First World War. The most powerful countries in Europe were grouped into opposing camps. Germany was in a Triple Alliance with Austria and Italy. Great Britain was in the Triple Entente with France and Russia. The terms of the Triple Alliance came into force over the issue of Serbia and quickly spread to involve many other countries by August 1914. When Germany supported Austria's attack on Serbia, Russia declared they would support Serbia.

<b>Level 2:</b>	<b>Simple explanation of stated factor or other factor(s)</b> <b>Answer demonstrates specific knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question</b>	<b>5–8</b>
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Answer demonstrates a simple, sustained line of reasoning which is coherent, structured, substantiated and explicitly relevant.

Answers arguing a preference for one judgement but with only basic explanation of another view will be marked at this level.

Students may progress from a basic explanation of causation by simple reasoning and supporting it with factual knowledge and understanding.

For example, the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand was the reason why war started. In retaliation for the assassination, Austria declared war against Serbia. When Russia began to mobilise in order to support Serbia, Germany declared war on Russia.

<b>Level 1:</b>	<b>Basic explanation of one or more factors</b> <b>Answer demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question</b>	<b>1–4</b>
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Answer demonstrates a basic line of reasoning, which is coherent, structured with some substantiation; the relevance might be implicit.

Students recognise and provide a basic explanation of one or more factors.

Students may offer a basic explanation of the stated factor, such as the Kaiser wanted to conquer more land for the German Empire.

Students may offer basic explanations of other factor(s), for example, all the major countries in Europe were in an arms race where they increased the amount of money they spent on their armies.

**Students either submit no evidence or fail to address the question**

**0**

### Spelling, punctuation and grammar

	<b>Performance descriptor</b>	<b>Marks awarded</b>
High performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners spell and punctuate with consistent accuracy</li> <li>Learners use rules of grammar with effective control of meaning overall</li> <li>Learners use a wide range of specialist terms as appropriate</li> </ul>	4 marks
Intermediate performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners spell and punctuate with considerable accuracy</li> <li>Learners use rules of grammar with general control of meaning overall</li> <li>Learners use a good range of specialist terms as appropriate</li> </ul>	2–3 marks
Threshold performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners spell and punctuate with reasonable accuracy</li> <li>Learners use rules of grammar with some control of meaning and any errors do not significantly hinder meaning overall</li> <li>Learners use a limited range of specialist terms as appropriate</li> </ul>	1 mark
No marks awarded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The learner writes nothing</li> <li>The learner's response does not relate to the question</li> <li>The learner's achievement in SPaG does not reach the threshold performance level, for example errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar severely hinder meaning</li> </ul>	0 marks