



General Certificate in Education

A2 History 6041

Alternative U Unit 5

Mark Scheme

2008 examination – June series

Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation meeting ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for the standardisation meeting each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed at the meeting and legislated for. If, after this meeting, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been discussed at the meeting they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' 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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CRITERIA FOR MARKING GCE HISTORY:

A2 EXAMINATION PAPERS

General Guidance for Examiners

A: INTRODUCTION

The AQA's A2 History specification has been designed to be 'objectives-led' in that questions are set which address the assessment objectives published in the Board's specification. These cover the normal range of skills, knowledge and understanding which have been addressed by A2 level candidates for a number of years.

Most questions will address more than one objective reflecting the fact that, at A2 level, high-level historical skills, including knowledge and understanding, are usually deployed together.

The specification has addressed subject content through the identification of 'key questions' which focus on important historical issues. These 'key questions' give emphasis to the view that GCE History is concerned with the analysis of historical problems and issues, the study of which encourages candidates to make judgements grounded in evidence and information.

The schemes of marking for the specification reflect these underlying principles. The mark scheme which follows is of the 'levels of response' type showing that candidates are expected to demonstrate their mastery of historical skills in the context of their knowledge and understanding of History.

Consistency of marking is of the essence in all public examinations. This factor is particularly important in a subject like History which offers a wide choice of subject content options or alternatives within the specification for A2.

It is therefore of vital importance that assistant examiners apply the marking scheme as directed by the Principal Examiner in order to facilitate comparability with the marking of other alternatives.

Before scrutinising and applying the detail of the specific mark scheme which follows, assistant examiners are required to familiarise themselves with the instructions and guidance on the general principles to apply in determining into which level of response an answer should fall (Section B) and in deciding on a mark within a particular level of response (Section C).

B: EXEMPLIFICATION OF A LEVEL (A2) DESCRIPTORS

The relationship between the Assessment Objectives (AOs) 1.1, 1.2 and 2 and the Levels of Response.

A study of the generic levels of response mark scheme will show that candidates who operate solely or predominantly in AO 1.1, by writing a narrative or descriptive response, will restrict themselves to a maximum of 6 out of 20 marks by performing at Level 1. Those candidates going on to provide more explanation (AO 1.2), supported by the relevant selection of material (AO1.1), will have access to approximately 6 more marks, performing at Level 2 and low Level 3, depending on how implicit or partial their judgements prove to be. Candidates providing explanation with evaluation and judgement, supported by the selection of appropriate information and exemplification, will clearly be operating in all 3 AOs (AO 2, AO1.2 and AO1.1) and will therefore have access to the highest levels and the full range of 20 marks by performing in Levels 3, 4 and 5.

Level 1:***Either***

Is able to demonstrate, by relevant selection of material, implicit understanding of the question. Answers will be predominantly, or wholly narrative.

Or

Answer implies analysis but is excessively generalised, being largely or wholly devoid of specific information. Such answers will amount to little more than assertion, involving generalisations which could apply to almost any time and/or place.

Exemplification/guidance

Narrative responses will have the following characteristic: they

- will lack direction and any clear links to the analytical demands of the question
- will, therefore, offer a relevant but outline-only description in response to the question
- will be limited in terms of communication skills, organisation and grammatical accuracy.

Assertive responses: at this level, such responses will:

- lack any significant corroboration
- be generalised and poorly focused
- demonstrate limited appreciation of specific content
- be limited in terms of communication skills, organisation and grammatical accuracy.

IT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO DISCRIMINATE BETWEEN THIS TYPE OF RESPONSE AND THOSE WHICH ARE SUCCINCT AND UNDEVELOPED BUT FOCUSED AND VALID (appropriate for Level 2 or above).

Level 2:***Either***

Demonstrates, by relevant selection of material, some understanding of a range of relevant issues. Most such answers will show understanding of the analytical demands but lack weight and balance.

Or

Demonstrates, by relevant selection of material, implicit understanding of a wide range of relevant issues. Most such answers will be dependent on descriptions, but will have valid links.

Exemplification/guidance

Narrative responses will have the following characteristics:

- understanding of some but not all of the issues
- some direction and focus demonstrated largely through introductions or conclusions
- some irrelevance and inaccuracy
- coverage of all parts of the question but be lacking in balance
- some effective use of the language, be coherent in structure, but limited grammatically.

Analytical responses will have the following characteristics:

- arguments which have some focus and relevance
- an awareness of the specific context
- some accurate but limited factual support
- coverage of all parts of the question but be lacking in balance
- some effective use of language, be coherent in structure, but limited grammatically.

Level 3:

Demonstrates by selection of appropriate material, explicit understanding of a range of issues relevant to the question. Judgement, as demanded by the question, may be implicit or partial.

Exemplification/guidance

Level 3 responses will be characterised by the following:

- the approach will be generally analytical but may include some narrative passages which will be limited and controlled
- analysis will be focused and substantiated, although a complete balance of treatment of issues is not to be expected at this level nor is full supporting material
- there will be a consistent argument which may, however, be incompletely developed, not fully convincing or which may occasionally digress into narrative
- there will be relevant supporting material, although not necessarily comprehensive, which might include reference to interpretations
- effective use of language, appropriate historical terminology and coherence of style.

Level 4:

Demonstrates by selection of a wide range of precisely selected material, explicit understanding of the demands of the question and provides a consistently analytical response to it. Judgement, as demanded by the question, will be explicit but may be limited in scope.

Exemplification/guidance

Answers at this level have the following characteristics:

- sustained analysis, explicitly supported by relevant and accurate evidence
- little or no narrative, usually in the form of exemplification
- coverage of all the major issues, although there may not be balance of treatment
- an attempt to offer judgement, but this may be partial and in the form of a conclusion or summary
- effective skills of communication through the use of accurate, fluent and well directed prose.

Level 5:

As Level 4 but also shows appropriate conceptual awareness which, together with the selection of a wide range of precisely selected evidence, offers independent and effectively sustained judgement appropriate to the full demands of the question.

Exemplification/guidance

Level 5 will be differentiated from Level 4 in that there will be:

- a consistently analytical approach
- consistent corroboration by reference to selected evidence
- a clear and consistent attempt to reach judgements
- some evidence of independence of thought, but not necessarily of originality
- a good conceptual understanding
- strong and effective communication skills, grammatically accurate and demonstrating coherence and clarity of thought.

C: DECIDING ON MARKS WITHIN A LEVEL

These principles are applicable to both the Advanced Subsidiary examination and to the A level (A2) examination.

Good examining is, ultimately, about the **consistent application of judgement**. Mark schemes provide the necessary framework for exercising that judgement but it cannot cover all eventualities. This is especially so in subjects like History, which in part rely upon different interpretations and different emphases given to the same content. One of the main difficulties confronting examiners is: "What precise mark should I give to a response *within* a level?". Levels may cover four, five or even six marks. From a maximum of 20, this is a large proportion. In making a decision about a specific mark to award, it is vitally important to think *first* of the mid-range within the level, where the level covers more than two marks. Comparison with other candidates' responses **to the same question** might then suggest that such an award would be unduly generous or severe.

In making a decision away from the middle of the level, examiners should ask themselves several questions relating to candidate attainment, **including the quality of written communication skills**. The more positive the answer, the higher should be the mark awarded. We want to avoid "bunching" of marks. Levels mark schemes can produce regression to the mean, which should be avoided.

So, is the response:

- precise in its use of factual information?
- appropriately detailed?
- factually accurate?
- appropriately balanced, or markedly better in some areas than in others?
- and, **with regard to the quality of written communication skills:**
generally coherent in expression and cogent in development (as appropriate to the level awarded by organising relevant information clearly and coherently, using specialist vocabulary and terminology)?
- well-presented as to general quality of language, i.e. use of syntax (including accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar)? (In operating this criterion, however, it is important to avoid "double jeopardy". Going to the bottom of the mark range for a level in each part of a structured question might well result in too harsh a judgement. The overall aim is to mark positively, giving credit for what candidates know, understand and can do, rather than looking for reasons to reduce marks.)

It is very important that Assistant Examiners **do not** always start at the lowest mark within the level and look for reasons to increase the level of reward from the lowest point. This will depress marks for the alternative in question and will cause problems of comparability with other question papers within the same specification.

June 2008

Alternative U: Britain, 1929–1998

A2 Unit 5: Britain, 1951–1997

Question 1

- (a) Use **Sources A** and **C** and your own knowledge.

To what extent do these sources agree on social trends in Britain in the 1960s?

(10 marks)

Target: AO1.1, AO1.2

- L1: Extracts simple statements from the sources or refers to own knowledge to demonstrate agreement/disagreement on the issue/event which is the subject of debate. **1-2**
- L2: Demonstrates explicit understanding of aspects of agreement/disagreement on the issue/event which is the subject of debate, with reference to either sources and/or own knowledge. **3-5**
- L3: Demonstrates explicit understanding of similarity and difference of interpretation in relation to the debate and offers some explanation. **6-8**
- L4: Uses appropriately selected material, from both sources and own knowledge, to reach a sustained judgement on the extent of similarity and difference in interpretation in relation to the debate. **9-10**

Indicative content

Level 1 answers will use the two sources to provide literal evidence of agreement or disagreement concerning attitudes, e.g. both Sources A and C comment on the younger generation. Source A is totally focused on change in attitudes, whereas only the first half of Source C is. Level 2 answers should start to demonstrate a more accurate grasp of the evidence, perhaps by pairing a series of source extracts to show difference in attitudes, e.g. Source A is focused on change and challenge to the status quo – ‘Youth became increasingly challenging towards the establishment’, whereas Source C implies that there is a large debate over whether Britain in fact was in a state of radical change or not – ‘Liberal attitudes were by no means as widespread in British society in the 1960s as might be suggested.’ Source A suggests that the youth of Britain was determined to challenge old traditions whereas Source C uses a series of examples of reforms in the law to highlight the concern of a significant proportion of the electorate who wished to keep tradition. For Level 3, candidates should clearly flag up the difference in attitudes and tone and examine the provenance of the sources. Good candidates may comment that Source C is balanced and attempts to provide some evidence to support its objectivity. Source A centres on the potential power of youth and implies an end to the age of deference. It suggests a much more open-minded, liberal society is in the making – ‘increasingly experimental and non-conformist’. The tone suggests a time of opportunity and optimism with rising affluence. Source C on the contrary suggests a society where the majority find the ‘permissive society’ and the progressive laws difficult to accept. Although it is not said, own knowledge should point out that Sources A and C are basically referring to trends driven by the white, middle class sector of society.

Good Level 3 and Level 4 candidates will be aware of the tone and language used in the sources and will demonstrate some judgement. Source A appears to be generally positive in intent and could be a sympathetic observer – social revolution and change in social values and morals appear a natural consequence of a Britain growing in wealth. With Source C, candidates should note that the author is more critical and there is much more of an attempt to provide some evaluation and assessment of the changes. Source C even suggests that society was only exhibiting symptoms, whereas Source A uses the word revolution 3 times and suggests it is taking or has taken place. Some of the judgement shown may also refer to the fact that both Sources A and C imply that any change observed was due to educational advancement – ‘wider educational standards’ in Source A and ‘the work of an educated, middle class’ in Source C.

- (b) Use **Sources A, B and C** and your own knowledge.

‘A time of protests rather than of social revolution.’

Assess the validity of this view of the 1960s in Britain.

(20 marks)

Target: AO1.1, AO1.2, AO2

- L1: Is able to demonstrate, by relevant selection of material, *either* from the sources *or* from own knowledge, implicit understanding of the question. Answers will be predominantly, or wholly, narrative. **1-6**
- L2: ***Either***
Demonstrates, by relevant selection of material, *either* from the sources *or* from own knowledge, some understanding of a range of relevant issues. Most such answers will show understanding of the analytical demands but will lack weight and balance.
- Or***
Demonstrates, by relevant selection of material, *both* from the sources *and* from own knowledge, implicit understanding of a wide range of relevant issues. These answers, while relevant, will lack both range and depth and will contain some assertion. **7-11**
- L3: Is able to demonstrate, by relevant selection of material, *both* from the sources *and* from own knowledge, explicit understanding of the issues relevant to the question. Judgement, as demanded by the question, may be implicit or partial. **12-15**
- L4: Demonstrates, by selection of a wide range of precisely selected material, *both* from the sources *and* from own knowledge, explicit understanding of the demands of the question and provides a consistently analytical response to it. Judgement, as demanded by the question, will be explicit but may be limited in scope. **16-18**
- L5: As L4, but also shows appropriate conceptual awareness which, together with a selection of a wide range of precisely selected evidence, offers independent and effectively sustained judgement appropriate to the full demands of the question. **19-20**

Indicative content

This question centres on the premise that the cumulative impact of the social and cultural changes in Britain in this period cannot be classified as a social revolution but fundamentally as a period of protest. Candidates will have to assess whether the huge range of issues characterised as the ‘permissive society’ impacted in such a deep-seated way as to constitute a ‘social revolution’, or whether the 1960s should be seen in a much less romanticised and objective way. For example, do the problems facing the Wilson Governments – devolution, the increasing power and impact of the trade unions, the significance of strikes, CND, etc. – far outweigh the optimistic claims for a social revolution? In order to get good marks, candidates will need to go further than just producing pre-prepared essays on ‘to what extent did Britain experience a social revolution?’ and try and analyse the key events and issues of the 1960s.

Level 1 and 2 answers may well make sweeping and uncritical assertions – perhaps from Source A – about the extent of change and develop their answers in a simplistic fashion, based on the views of Marwick. They will also tend to use narrative to give a list of the key issues and/or legislative changes. Selective phrases will probably be lifted from the sources to support the narrative. Clearly Level 3 and above answers will start to examine both the nature, extent and

significance of the impact of the changes and good candidates should examine a swathe of issues such as education, feminism, race, abortion, homosexuality, student politics etc. and compare their impact with the major problems facing Wilson. All three sources should be helpful to the candidates. Candidates can profitably use the three sources, especially Sources A and C when trying to assess whether a social revolution can be attributed to this period. Source B is helpful as it suggests a time of little change, in fact a time of narrow-mindedness. The best answers should demonstrate some synoptic aspects as the period is examined as a whole, but coverage of the whole period is not expected to be comprehensive. What is very important is that candidates should attempt to balance the two aspects offered in the question and assess their relative impact. Very good answers may well argue that they are not mutually exclusive and that protest can be seen as part of social revolution. As always, good Level 4 and 5 answers may reject the premise of the question and pursue a relevant argument, well-supported by evidence drawn from the sources and own knowledge.

Section B

Questions 2-7 are synoptic in nature and the rewarding of candidates' responses should be clearly linked to the range of factors or issues covered in the generic A2 Levels of Response mark scheme and by the indicative content in the specific mark scheme for each question.

Standard Mark Scheme for Essays at A2 (without reference to sources)

Target: AO1.1, AO1.2, AO2

L1: *Either*

Is able to demonstrate, by relevant selection of material, implicit understanding of the question. Answers will be predominantly, or wholly, narrative.

Or

Answer implies analysis, but is excessively generalised, being largely or wholly devoid of specific information. Such responses will amount to little more than assertion, involving generalisations which could apply to almost any time and/or place. **1-6**

L2: *Either*

Demonstrates, by relevant selection of material, some understanding of a range of relevant issues. Most such answers will show understanding of the analytical demands, but will lack weight and balance.

Or

Demonstrates, by selection of appropriate material, implicit understanding of a range of relevant issues. Most such answers will be dependent on descriptions, but will have valid links. **7-11**

L3: Demonstrates, by selection of appropriate material, explicit understanding of a range of issues relevant to the question. Judgement, as demanded by the question, may be implicit or partial. **12-15**

L4: Demonstrates, by selection of a wide range of precisely selected material, explicit understanding of the demands of the question and provides a consistently analytical response to it. Judgement, as demanded by the question, will be explicit but may be limited in scope. **16-18**

L5: As L4, but also shows appropriate conceptual awareness which, together with the selection of a wide range of precisely selected evidence, offers independent and effectively sustained judgement appropriate to the full demands of the question. **19-20**

Question 2

'A period of increasing affluence.'

'Thirteen wasted years.'

Which of these statements provides the more convincing assessment of Britain under the Conservatives in the years 1951 to 1964? (20 marks)

Use standard mark schemes for essays at A2 (*without* reference to sources).

Marks as follows:

L1: 1-6

L2: 7-11

L3: 12-15

L4: 16-18

L5: 19-20

Indicative content

The key to this question is the need for a balanced assessment of Conservative rule in the years 1951 to 1964, using the twin quotations as prompts. Answers should seek to demonstrate one of them to be 'correct' (or mostly so) and to refute the other; or perhaps rejecting or re-defining both statements in order to set out a 'third' stronger interpretation – that for Britain the years 1951–1964 were neither a period of continuous and uninterrupted expansion as the Conservatives would like us to believe, nor the thirteen wasted years of Labour mythology.

Level 1 and 2 answers will probably use a narrative of some or all the period to make uncritical or generalised comments – talking about 'boom and bust', the role of Macmillan etc. Level 3, 4 and 5 answers will start to make increased judgement on the Conservative record. Some candidates may go outside the timeframe to add greater context but this is not essential. Sophisticated answers may bring in the concept of 'post-war consensus' to highlight two points. On the one hand, consensus did use a mixed economy and welfare state to humanise the political scene in these years but on the other hand it also acted as an economic straightjacket as it signified acceptance of traditional assumptions at a time when a more imaginative approach was needed to confront the future. The best answers, at Level 3 and beyond, will differentiate across the period, highlighting the periods of affluence, perhaps attached to 'boom and bust' tactics at election times, along with sterling crises and an underlying economic deterioration. Although the question can be answered with a predominantly economic response, political assessment should be present and form part of the judgement. However, arguments will often centre on economic performance. Many candidates will examine the reasons for Conservative success in elections, link it to a general rise in living standards and place emphasis on the later part of the period under Macmillan. Some may suggest that, with such a divided opposition, the Conservatives were lucky to win three elections. However, others will support the second quotation by noting that any apparent success might be due to illusion and evasion (K O Morgan). Evidence will be given to show that Britain did still lag behind some recovering western nations in terms of production, the upward curve of public spending was a major issue and by 1960 the economic signs were unpromising. The Conservative successes of the late 1950s perhaps owed much to good fortune, especially with an emasculated Labour party.

Question 3

'Heath's legacy, rather than the weak leadership of Wilson and Callaghan, was the key to Labour failure.'

How valid is this explanation of why Labour lost the general election of 1979? (20 marks)

Use standard mark scheme for essays at A2 (*without* reference to sources).

Marks as follows:

L1: 1-6

L2: 7-11

L3: 12-15

L4: 16-18

L5: 19-20

Indicative content

The question is a slight variation on the reasons why the Conservatives won the general election in 1979. The premise of the question offers much scope for candidates to put forward a range of possibilities. Good candidates will recognise change over time and that the answer will involve a mixture of short and longer term factors. Discussion will clearly examine the policies and leadership qualities of Heath, Wilson and Callaghan, the Thatcher factor, the 'Winter of Discontent', and perhaps the so-called 'sea-change' in British politics. Some candidates will support the view that Heath bequeathed the Labour government such a deteriorating political and economic legacy that Wilson and Callaghan were left with limited room for manoeuvre. Some may argue that Heath is really unimportant as his legacy was minimal. Other candidates may develop the line that Callaghan in fact threw away the 1979 election by calling it at the wrong time and that the Conservatives had been rejuvenated under Thatcher since 1975 and that her appeal was the most important factor.

Level 1 and 2 answers are likely to contain a lot of narrative of the 1970s giving a sound description of events, without really focusing on the demands of the question. Answers could not reasonably be expected to account for all, or even most, of these possibilities but successful candidates at Levels 3, 4 and 5 should attempt to support or reject the premise of the question.

Question 4

How significant was the impact of the 1973 oil price crisis on political and economic life in Britain during the 1970s and early 1980s? (20 marks)

Use standard mark scheme for essays at A2 (*without* reference to sources).

Marks as follows:

L1: 1-6

L2: 7-11

L3: 12-15

L4: 16-18

L5: 19-20

Indicative content

The question is centred on both the economic and political impact. It demands a thorough evaluation of the consequences. The economic aspect will see candidates examining how, and why, did the 1973 oil-price crisis affect and influence the subsequent recession and industrial strife. The political dimension is more profound. It raises huge political problems such as Edward Heath and the decision to have a three-day week, the eventual rise of Margaret Thatcher, the end to consensus and the emergence of more radical policies. With regards to Labour, how did it affect Wilson's and Callaghan's ability to govern? How great was the correlation between the 1973/4 crisis and the rise of the Bennite left and the coming Winter of Discontent? How significant was the public perception of Labour as being economically incompetent?

A balanced answer will require both aspects of the question to be addressed, although this may not involve balanced coverage, e.g. answers may be more 'political' than 'economic' in evidence or emphasis and may spend more time on its impact in the 1970s as opposed to the early 1980s. It is critical, however, to focus on 1973 and its significance. Some adequate answers may make a brief analysis of the 1973/1974 oil-price crisis but answers require much more than a simplistic narrative account of the Winter of Discontent and the election of Thatcher in 1979. Candidates will need to try and assess the significance over a period of time. Differentiated answers, showing the importance of key factors and key events will often be placed in Level 4 and above.

Question 5

'Thatcher's fall in 1990 was due more to the verdict of the British public on her policies than any "betrayal" by her own ministers.'

How convincing is this view?

(20 marks)

Use standard mark scheme for essays at A2 (*without* reference to sources).

Marks as follows:

L1: 1-6

L2: 7-11

L3: 12-15

L4: 16-18

L5: 19-20

Indicative content

In attempting to explain why Thatcher was rejected by her own party in 1990, candidates will have to assess the impact of her eleven years in power and make a choice between the British public as her executioner or her party. The latter should include ministers, who recognised that she had become an election-losing liability. Successful answers may adopt a third, more balanced assessment which rejects both views in the quotation and sets out its own viewpoint. This assessment may well combine both parts of the question, and highlight the revival of Labour Party fortunes as further pressure on the Conservative Party to make a decision, however terminal. Good answers will assert a coherent case and show awareness of the key issues under discussion. They should also show some grasp of the eleven years, differentiating between the three stages of Thatcherism, the relative popularity in the second phase and then measure changing fortune over time. Level 4 and 5 answers will also be able to differentiate between the various elements of the Conservative Party, whether for or against Thatcher, and be able to assess the role and attitudes of key personalities such as Heseltine, Lawson and Howe.

Question 6

‘Controversy over involvement with the EEC was not based on the principle of membership; the real quarrel was about further integration.’

How valid is this assessment of the reasons why Britain's relations with Europe were so contentious in the years 1973 to 1997? (20 marks)

Use standard mark scheme for essays at A2 (*without* reference to sources).

Marks as follows:

L1: 1-6

L2: 7-11

L3: 12-15

L4: 16-18

L5: 19-20

Indicative content

As this question examines a complex, highly controversial issue facing Britain over a period of 25 years, it is not essential to provide comprehensive coverage of all these years. The crux of the question revolves around Britain's dilemma – her motives behind the decision to join, and remain in, Europe in light of fears over future developments, particularly those of more political integration. Candidates should note the changing political stances of the two main parties, especially a paradox in that it was divisions within Labour that led initially to the 1975 referendum and the hostility to Europe was most pronounced on the Labour Left until the late 1980s; at this point the Eurosceptic tide started running more significantly in the Conservative Party, especially against Maastricht. Good candidates may use the 1975 referendum as a reference point – statistically it was successful but what agendas – positive and negative – did it release after this point within both parties and across Britain with regard to continued membership and/or further integration? All the central issues – Euroscepticism; loss of British sovereignty; her position on the world stage; political and economic control over her own destiny – should be examined. The best answers may well differentiate, showing examples that Mrs Thatcher's position changed over time; how the national press influenced the debate; or how divisions over Europe persisted within the Labour Party, although overshadowed by later Conservative in-fighting in the 1980s and 1990s. It is perfectly valid to highlight New Labour's and Tony Blair's position and the most effective answers will focus on explanation and assessment of the two aspects – membership and integration in the years 1973 to 1997. Candidates will not be rewarded for opinionated narratives which are long on assertion and weak on argument. Successful answers of course may well reject the premise of the question and decide to adopt a more partisan approach. This is acceptable as long as it pursues a coherent, well-supported argument.

Question 7

'Far from damaging the Labour Party, the formation of the SDP in 1981 paved the way for Labour's recovery.'

How valid is this view?

(20 marks)

Use standard mark scheme for essays at A2 (*without* reference to sources).

Marks as follows:

L1: 1-6

L2: 7-11

L3: 12-15

L4: 16-18

L5: 19-20

Indicative content

This question is asking candidates to balance one key factor – the significance of the formation of the SDP in 1981 – against a range of other factors in an assessment of why Labour was able to return from the political wilderness in 1997. It may seem mainly about the internal affairs of the Labour Party but the key task is for candidates to assess the impact of the SDP in terms of making the Labour party confront itself in the 1980s and early 1990s. Relevant material on the decline of the Conservatives which opened the path for Labour may be profitably used – particularly the Thatcher legacy, Europe, 'sleaze' and the 'economic' issue of the ERM crisis – but care should be taken over pre-prepared answers. These may be focused on a different question i.e. one which simply lists factors in the revival of Labour, especially Blair and the re-branding of New Labour, and which does not look at change over time. Clearly references to New Labour and key personalities such as Gould, Mandelson and Campbell are appropriate but candidates must examine the relative, destabilising impact of the SDP and the resultant clash between Kinnock and Militant for the soul of Labour. Alternatively, candidates may offer a different explanation for the Labour revival – they may see the SDP as just a minor irritant compared to the other Labour 'disasters' in the 1980s but they must show awareness of developments across the 1980s and 1990s and not just give a detailed narrative of the period.