



General Certificate of Education

AS History 1041

Unit 1: HIS1E

Absolutist States:

The Reign of Louis XIV, 1661–1715

Mark Scheme

2009 examination – January 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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Generic Introduction for AS

The AS History specification is based on the assessment objectives laid down in QCA's GCE History subject criteria and published in the AQA specification booklet. These cover the skills, knowledge and understanding which are expected of A Level candidates. Most questions address more than one objective since historical skills, which include knowledge and understanding, are usually deployed together. Consequently, the marking scheme which follows is a 'levels of response' scheme and assesses candidates' historical skills in the context of their knowledge and understanding of History.

The levels of response are a graduated recognition of how candidates have demonstrated their abilities in the Assessment Objectives. Candidates who predominantly address AO1(a) by writing narrative or description will perform at Level 1 or Level 2 depending on its relevance. Candidates who provide more explanation – (AO1(b), supported by the relevant selection of material, AO1(a)) – will perform at high Level 2 or low-mid Level 3 depending on how explicit they are in their response to the question. Candidates who provide explanation with evaluation, judgement and an awareness of historical interpretations will be addressing all 3 AOs (AO1(a); AO1(b); AO2(a) and (b) and will have access to the higher mark ranges. AO2(a) which requires the evaluation of source material is assessed in Unit 2.

Differentiation between Levels 3, 4 and 5 is judged according to the extent to which candidates meet this range of assessment objectives. At Level 3 the answers will show more characteristics of the AO1 objectives, although there should be elements of AO2. At Level 4, AO2 criteria, particularly an understanding of how the past has been interpreted, will be more in evidence and this will be even more dominant at Level 5. The demands on written communication, particularly the organisation of ideas and the use of specialist vocabulary also increase through the various levels so that a candidate performing at the highest AS level is already well prepared for the demands of A2.

CRITERIA FOR MARKING GCE HISTORY:

AS EXAMINATION PAPERS

General Guidance for Examiners (to accompany Level Descriptors)

Deciding on a level and the award of marks within a level

It is of vital importance that examiners familiarise themselves with the generic mark scheme and apply it consistently, as directed by the Principal Examiner, in order to facilitate comparability across options.

The indicative mark scheme for each paper is designed to illustrate some of the material that candidates might refer to (knowledge) and some of the approaches and ideas they might develop (skills). It is not, however, prescriptive and should only be used to exemplify the generic mark scheme.

When applying the generic mark scheme, examiners will constantly need to exercise judgement to decide which level fits an answer best. Few essays will display all the characteristics of a level, so deciding the most appropriate will always be the first task.

Each level has a range of marks and for an essay which has a strong correlation with the level descriptors the middle mark should be given. However, when an answer has some of the characteristics of the level above or below, or seems stronger or weaker on comparison with many other candidates' responses to the same question, the mark will need to be adjusted up or down.

When deciding on the mark within a level, the following criteria should be considered *in relation to the level descriptors*. Candidates should never be doubly penalised. If a candidate with poor communication skills has been placed in Level 2, he or she should not be moved to the bottom of the level on the basis of the poor quality of written communication. On the other hand, a candidate with similarly poor skills, whose work otherwise matched the criteria for Level 4 should be adjusted downwards within the level.

Criteria for deciding marks within a level:

- The accuracy of factual information
- The level of detail
- The depth and precision displayed
- The quality of links and arguments
- The quality of written communication (grammar, spelling, punctuation and legibility; an appropriate form and style of writing; clear and coherent organisation of ideas, including the use of specialist vocabulary)
- Appropriate references to historical interpretation and debate
- The conclusion

January 2009

GCE AS History Unit 1: Change and Consolidation

HIS1E: Absolutist States: The Reign of Louis XIV, 1661–1715

Generic Mark Scheme

Question 1(a), Question 2(a) and Question 3(a)

- L1:** Answers will contain either some descriptive material which is only loosely linked to the focus of the question or some explicit comment with little, if any, appropriate support. Answers are likely to be generalised and assertive. The response will be limited in development and skills of written communication will be weak. **0-2**
- L2:** Answers will demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of the demands of the question. They will **either** be almost entirely descriptive with few explicit links to the question **or** they will provide some explanations backed by evidence that is limited in range and/or depth. Answers will be coherent but weakly expressed and/or poorly structured. **3-6**
- L3:** Answers will demonstrate good understanding of the demands of the question providing relevant explanations backed by appropriately selected information, although this may not be full or comprehensive. Answers will, for the most part, be clearly expressed and show some organisation in the presentation of material. **7-9**
- L4:** Answers will be well-focused, identifying a range of specific explanations, backed by precise evidence and demonstrating good understanding of the connections and links between events/issues. Answers will, for the most part, be well-written and organised. **10-12**

Question 1(b), Question 2(b) and Question 3(b)

- L1:** Answers may either contain some descriptive material which is only loosely linked to the focus of the question or they may address only a part of the question. Alternatively, there may be some explicit comment with little, if any, appropriate support. Answers are likely to be generalised and assertive. There will be little, if any, awareness of differing historical interpretations. The response will be limited in development and skills of written communication will be weak. **0-6**
- L2:** Answers will show some understanding of the focus of the question. They will either be almost entirely descriptive with few explicit links to the question or they may contain some explicit comment with relevant but limited support. They will display limited understanding of differing historical interpretations. Answers will be coherent but weakly expressed and/or poorly structured. **7-11**
- L3:** Answers will show a developed understanding of the demands of the question. They will provide some assessment, backed by relevant and appropriately selected evidence, but they will lack depth and/or balance. There will be some understanding of varying historical interpretations. Answers will, for the most part, be clearly expressed and show some organisation in the presentation of material. **12-16**

L4: Answers will show explicit understanding of the demands of the question. They will develop a balanced argument backed by a good range of appropriately selected evidence and a good understanding of historical interpretations. Answers will, for the most part, show organisation and good skills of written communication. **17-21**

L5: Answers will be well-focused and closely argued. The arguments will be supported by precisely selected evidence leading to a relevant conclusion/judgement, incorporating well-developed understanding of historical interpretations and debate. Answers will, for the most part, be carefully organised and fluently written, using appropriate vocabulary. **22-24**

Question 1

(a) Explain why Louis XIV ordered the construction of the Palace of Versailles. (12 marks)

Target: AO1(a), AO1(b)

Indicative content

This question allows candidates to address a number of possible motives for the enlargement of Versailles, both practical and symbolic:

- the desire of a young and ambitious king might well be considered to have featured highly in the decision to construct a palace on the scale of Versailles, and some candidates might well make links with Louis XIV's pursuit of glory and reputation
- Louis XIV was keen to establish France's reputation abroad as a cultural and intellectual centre of Europe. In addition, Versailles was to symbolise the new position of France on the international stage
- Louis XIV had a genuine desire to centralise government and to increase his own domestic authority. Much of this sprang from his own experiences during the Frondes and his professed objective of ruling alone. Versailles was necessary after the erosion of the tradition of a Court that travelled the country and would apparently ensure that control of the provinces was easier to manage
- control over the nobility was an essential objective, especially for a king keen to ensure that the civil strife of his minority should be avoided. Rather than the court staying with the provincial elite, it was that elite that was to pay their respects to the king together at Versailles
- the promotion of domestic craftsmen was probably a less significant factor, at least in the initial decision to construct Versailles, however it is worthy of credit
- the most prominent motive was the desire to rule through imagery. Versailles would not only serve to increase Louis XIV's reputation, but would symbolise the order and uniformity after which Louis XIV hankered.

- (b) How successful was Louis XIV in maintaining the absolute authority of the monarchy in the years 1661 to 1685? (24 marks)

Target: AO1(a), AO1(b), AO2(b)

Indicative content

This question allows candidates to consider a central aspect of Louis XIV's reign and to consider a range of relevant factors:

- the length of Louis XIV's reign may itself serve as some initial indicator that he successfully maintained the authority of monarchy. Indeed, considering the nature of the troubled inheritance in 1661, sheer survival is itself notable. There was no repeat of the Frondes and, despite bouts of civil unrest, there was never any effective challenge to the authority of Louis XIV as king. However, focus should clearly be on the period set by the question
- Louis XIV worked hard at consolidating his rule. His declaration of personal rule in 1661 was a significant attempt to move away from the era of principal ministers. The trial and humiliation of Fouquet clearly pointed to a king keen to assert the authority of monarchy from the very start
- the removal of Parlements' pre-registration remonstrance in 1673 certainly eased the introduction of legislation throughout the reign. Parlement only became a significant opponent of royal policy during the Unigenitus dispute
- the use of intendants ensured that law and authority was conveyed into the provinces
- reform of the Royal Council and the promotion of careerists such as Colbert made administration easier and more efficient, as did Colbert's reforms of legal procedures and use of the Chambre de Justice to tackle corruption
- Louis XIV's domination of the nobility might well be considered to have been his most successful policy. The use of Versailles not only for centralised government but also as a symbol of royal power was significant, as was the imagery of the Sun King throughout France. Yet it was the apparent humbling of the aristocracy in ceremonies such as the levee that signified the dominant position of the monarchy under Louis XIV.

However, there is substantial evidence to suggest that Louis was not successful in maintaining absolute authority:

- the very nature of Early Modern Europe made it virtually impossible to rule alone – communication and transportation ensured that the provinces remained quasi-independent of royal authority
- there were notable theoretical obstacles to the notion of a truly absolute monarch. The Christian justification of Divine Right constrained any monarch to the moral teachings of the Church
- it was in religious policy that Louis failed to assert authority. The troubled relations with the papacy, especially concerning the Regale, proved Louis's need for good relations. Some candidates might suggest that Louis's inability to deal with the Huguenots effectively even before 1685 proves Louis's ability to assert his authority throughout France
- the imagery of Versailles was effective but the royal court did not move there in its entirety until 1683 and within a few years Madame de Maintenon's influence had reduced its ability to intimidate the nobility with showy spectacle. In addition, it was only ever the minority of nobles that could ever afford to live there

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- Parlement was indeed quiet throughout his reign, but there were significant periods of opposition especially from a Gallican perspective
 - much of the early success in maintaining authority might be credited to talented advisers rather than to Louis himself.

Question 2

- (a) Explain why France became involved in the War of Spanish Succession. (12 marks)

Target: AO1(a), AO1(b)

Indicative content

A number of factors might be identified:

- the Spanish succession had been a key feature of European diplomacy since the death of Philip IV in September 1665, the death of his successor, Carlos II, was eagerly awaited by the major powers. That he survived until 1700 came as some surprise and his lingering presence simply served to delay what most powers had come to accept would be a struggle for the division of the throne and also the Spanish Empire. The matter may have been resolved peacefully as a result of the various partition treaties signed in the seventeenth century
- however, it was Carlos's will and his bequest to Louis XIV's grandson, Phillippe, that became the determining factor behind France's involvement in war
- Louis could possibly have ignored the will, but such an action would have been detrimental to France's strategic interests. The search for secure borders not only with Spain, but also with the Spanish Netherlands, had long occupied Louis XIV, so to pass up this opportunity would have been foolhardy. This became even more pertinent after 1685 when much of the pro-huguenot literature entering France was shown to have originated from the Spanish possessions
- to have ignored the opportunity to acquire Spanish trade routes and valuable possessions would also have been damaging to France's trading interests, especially as rival powers were well-placed to seize them anyway
- Louis XIV's previously overtly aggressive foreign policy, combined with the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, rallied foreign powers into alliance, and made it impossible to envisage that such a large bequest to the Bourbons would go unheeded
- however, it is easy to exaggerate the degree to which Louis XIV was pushed into this war. Despite the financial exhaustion of France, especially after the Nine Years War. It was Louis who determined the course of French diplomacy. Possibly a pursuit for glory and reputation abroad was still a plausible factor, and it is certainly notable that simply because Louis XIV signed partition treaties, this alone did not mean that he ever had any intention of standing by their provisions.

- (b) How successful was Louis XIV in achieving the objectives of his foreign policy in the years 1685 to 1715? (24 marks)

Target: AO1(a), AO1(b), AO2(b)

Indicative content

Candidates might be expected to offer some definition of success in addition to establishing Louis XIV's objectives:

- Louis XIV's objectives are often considered to have consisted of the pursuit of glory; the search for defensible and rational frontiers; acquisition of title and especially 'the most Christian King of Europe'; financial and material gain
- Louis XIV's territorial acquisitions were impressive and included Franche-Comte, Dunkirk, Alsace and Strasbourg and a variety of towns associated with the policy of Reunions. In addition the basis had been laid for a Canadian empire. However, candidates might be expected to comment on a turning point in Louis XIV's foreign policy success with a clear deterioration in success post-1685
- strategically, France was probably better placed by the end of his reign than at the beginning, however, much of this success came before 1685. His military forces were respected, even feared especially after the military reforms of the beginning of the reign, and candidates may consider that the very existence of the Grand Alliance is evidence of the effectiveness of Louis XIV's aggressive tactics
- if Louis XIV's policy was motivated by a desire to realise what was rightfully and legally his, then it may be considered to have been successful. In the Spanish War Louis XIV achieved at least some of what had legally been bequeathed to the Bourbons by Carlos II
- the Bourbons had achieved considerable influence in the Spanish Empire. Indeed, with Phillippe on the throne of Spain, France's influence in Europe seemed impregnable
- Vauban's military fortifications served to protect France's borders, and certainly the north eastern frontier was more secure than at the beginning of the reign.

However, it is easy to argue the case for failure, and many candidates may indicate that Louis XIV's foreign policy achievements might be divided into a successful period before 1685, and a largely unsuccessful defensive policy after this date:

- whilst Louis XIV's drive for foreign policy glory may have worked domestically, his aggressive tactics angered foreign powers. He failed to realise, or indeed deliberately ignored the opinion of those outside of his realm and it was this that may directly be attributed to the formation of the Grand Alliance. This combined with his anti-huguenot policy reinforced the impression of an ambitious and dogmatically driven monarch keen to establish a 'universal religion' and to militarily dominate Europe
- whilst Louis XIV's opportunism may be considered to have led to success, for example in the War of Spanish Succession, his blatant disregard for political niceties clearly led to failure. He was never recognised as the most Christian King of Europe – a title retained by the Emperor. Whilst his reunions policy may be considered to have been successful, it was at the expense of his Christian credentials and the protection of Vienna
- Louis XIV's diplomacy was largely disastrous. The recognition of James and the continued Stuart claim to the English throne achieved nothing positive, and his misalignment against William of Orange was deeply significant

- territorially there were gains, but not as many as there might have been, and candidates may consider the sheer number of lands won and lost by Louis. The loss of Ypres and Menin ensured that his north eastern border remained vulnerable. Louis never achieved the objective of natural frontiers, even if they were slightly stronger
- the Nine Years War and especially the War of Spanish Succession, brought obvious failures. Whilst it is possible to claim these were defensive wars and, as France was largely territorially secure, Louis XIV also achieved his objectives here, it is easy to conclude that Louis brought these wars upon himself
- Louis failed to make peace in 1709 – it is wrong to suggest that Louis was the innocent pawn in the direction of war. The financial exhaustion, domestic unrest and loss of territory associated with the wars after 1685 does give good evidence for considerable failure
- whilst dynastically Louis succeeded in placing a Bourbon on the throne of Spain, this was not entirely the success that it might at first seem. Philippe had been forced to renounce his own claim to the French throne – something that it was unclear he had the ability to do. The treaties that ended the war saw France renounce hard won possessions. The fort at Dunkirk was to be demolished; Louis was to force the expulsion of the Jacobites. He had to abandon claims to territories such as Luxembourg. Louis had failed to secure his borders.

Question 3

- (a) Explain why Louis XIV introduced new forms of taxation in the later years of his reign. (12 marks)

Target: AO1(a), AO1(b)

Indicative content

This question allows candidates to consider motivation behind the tax impositions of Louis XIV's reign. A number of motives might be considered:

- the most significant long-term factor was the need to tax the privileged. Both the Capitation and Dixieme taxes that might considered to have been the most significant, extended the direct taxes to individuals previously exempt from the fiscal demands of the state
- considering the debt that France had accrued by the late seventeenth century it was clear that the existing system of relying on the Taille as the main form of direct tax was not providing sufficient income for the Crown. The growing size of the royal debt was evidence enough. Indeed, the amount collected by the Taille had actually declined throughout much of the early part of Louis XIV's reign, with a much greater reliance placed on forms of indirect taxation and especially the Gabelle
- such a fundamentally inequitable taxation policy had the potential to create social tension, especially as the third estate and particularly the peasantry were being taxed not only by the state but also by the church and also the church and local land owners in addition to onerous feudal dues and levies
- however, the new taxation was only a short-term solution to the financial crisis. They were not intended as a permanent breach of the traditional right of exemption. Indeed, it was not unusual for the privileged to be taxed in times of emergency

- most immediately emergency taxes were a reaction to crisis. The Dixieme in particular, introduced in 1710, was an attempt at a short-term and fairly immediate injection of funds to pay for the damaging continuation of the War of Spanish Succession
- new forms of taxation were simply intended as short-term fixes to the immediate pressures of funding a defensive foreign policy. Their impermanence is evidence that they were never intended as an initial blow against the advantages of privilege.

(b) How successful were the reforms to the French financial system in the years 1661 to 1715? (24 marks)

Target: AO1(a), AO1(b), AO2(b)

Indicative content

Candidates might be expected to give some definition of the financial needs of France as an effective basis for determining how successfully these were met:

- the financial system simply needed to provide for the demands of kingship. However, Louis XIV had inherited a throne in debt. Whilst this debt stood at around 400 million livres in 1661, and was therefore not crippling, it was this combined with the demands of the king in war and imagery that could potentially cripple the state. In addition, the taxation system was fundamentally inequitable with extensive exemptions depending on location and social position. The system of assessment for taxation was inefficient and that of collection was corrupt
- Colbert will probably be identified as the most significant factor in attempts to reform the financial system
- the establishment of the Chambres de Justice; the trial and humiliation of Fouquet, and Colbert's own relentless pursuit of fiscal economies within bureaucracy can all be identified as obvious factors that improved the efficiency of the collection of taxes. Although the trial of a few farmers general and of course Fouquet may not of itself be considered materially significant, the message clearly was and probably did much to reduce corruption
- the decision to reduce the burden of the Taille and focus more keenly on indirect tax actually increased the amount that was collected
- the use of Farmers Generals made collection cheaper and meant that the crown could receive a more immediate injection of cash which in turn clearly served Louis's own demands throughout the period
- at no time was Louis unable to pursue his domestic or foreign policy objectives due to financial crisis. To this degree the financial system certainly provided for the needs of the King
- the introduction of indirect taxes on luxury items and the imposition of tariff barriers further increased crown revenue
- attempts to consider economic reforms and especially the establishment of state monopolies and crown sponsored industry will be relevant if linked to the financial system through the collection of increased taxation.

However, there is much to suggest that the reforms to the financial system, although providing well for Louis XIV in the short-term, simply crippled France in the long-term and therefore did not provide for its needs:

- the sheer size of the royal debt by the end of the reign is perhaps evidence enough that the system failed to provide for the demands of the reign. Whilst Louis was never prevented from action for financial reasons, it is rather disingenuous to suggest that this proves the system was successful
- reliance on loans, often at high rates of interest, burdened the state with long-term obligations. To this extent Louis XIV's financial policies were short-term in the extreme
- continued reliance on the sale of office and annuities are again evidence of quick fixes for much more fundamental problems. Increasing the number of office holders simply removed some of the more entrepreneurial from the taxation system and created a burdensome bureaucracy
- the burden of the Taille, although decreased for a while, crippled the peasantry, and this combined with the Gabelle proves the unjustness of the financial system. This inequality in assessment remained throughout the period and reforms did little to address it
- towards the end of his reign Louis XIV was facing financial crisis. The melting of the royal plate during the War of Spanish Succession may have been a novel propaganda device, yet the burden of the war was significant and did lead to the introduction of emergency tax
- ultimately the reforms to the financial system had failed to provide for the needs of France even before the accession of Louis XIV. His increased expenditure further plunged France into debt. However, there was no bankruptcy and confidence from lenders remained high. The system was inefficient, short termist and inherently unjust, yet it did provide for Louis XIV, if not for the needs of France.