



A-level HISTORY 7042/2C

Component 2C The Reformation in Europe, c1500–1564

Mark scheme

June 2025

Version: 1.0 Final



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

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Supporting Marking Guidance

A separate Supporting Marking Guidance document has been created for use in this series and any future series.

It has been written by the senior examining team. It applies to all A-level History options. The purpose of the guidance is to clarify key aspects of the mark scheme and further ensure consistency of approach across all options. The guidance does not reflect a change in the standard applied, but clarification and amplification of the standard. We hope that the guidance document will aid you in your understanding of how the standard should be applied and deepen your understanding of how the key aspects of the mark scheme work. The Supporting Marking Guidance should always be used in conjunction with the mark scheme, and any relevant examiner standardising and teacher training material.

Examiners can find the Supporting Marking Guidance on the associate extranet.

Teachers can find the Supporting Marking Guidance alongside the current mark scheme on Centre Services on results day. It will also be published with any future assessment materials on the public website.

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.

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 religious problems in the Holy Roman Empire in the years 1550 to 1556.

[30 marks]

Target: AO2

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

Generic Mark Scheme

- 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.

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

Provenance, tone and emphasis

- Gallus is a Lutheran pastor and theologian. Gallus' remarks show defiance and the continued opposition, in Magdeburg, towards the Emperor and his desire for religious uniformity
- there is value in showing that, despite defeat at the Battle of Mühlberg and the provisions of the Augsburg Interim, there was continued hostility and 'resistance' to Charles, demonstrating that the Catholics had not been victorious
- there is honesty and realism here, 'we do not expect' and this therefore suggests that compromise was perceived as out of reach and that the conflict will have to continue
- the tone is defiant, 'we may defend ourselves'. Significantly, it is a direct appeal to the Emperor. It seeks to create a rift between him and the Pope.

Content and argument

- Gallus calls for armed resistance. There is value in showing the typicality of the use of the scriptures to justify such action
- Gallus argues that Catholics refuse to see Protestants as Christians. Therefore, this lack of toleration can only be met with force, we see the case argued that there is no alternative, thus justifying such a response
- Gallus seeks to defuse conflict with the Emperor. Gallus holds out the prospect that Protestants can be both loyal to Charles as well as having non-Catholic beliefs, we see an attempt at separating the secular from the spiritual
- significantly, Gallus attempts to portray the Pope as the problem. The position of the Pope had been a running sore through all previous attempts at negotiation between the two sides. There is value in observing the Protestant tactic of trying to divide the forces they face.

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

Provenance, tone and emphasis

- this is taken from the Peace of Augsburg which recognised two faiths in Germany. It is a legal document. By 1555, Charles was unable to realise the victory he thought he had in 1547 and so his purpose is to arrive at an accommodation with the Lutherans
- following Mühlberg, Charles was unable to subdue the Lutherans and so there is value in seeing the tangible evidence of Charles' failure. This is enhanced by the knowledge that the treaty was negotiated by Ferdinand, his brother
- the embedding of Lutheranism over decades is apparent here and so there is value in seeing the HRE bow to the inevitable. Nevertheless, the purpose here has an element of damage limitation in that the agreement is confined to Catholics and Lutherans

- the tone is equable; there is talk of peace, friendship even. This is a pragmatic settlement. However, there is value in seeing the religious limitations of the provision for peace and the significance of the religious choice of each prince to the Reformation.

Content and argument

- this is a key moment in the history of the 16th century. A peace, of sorts, was concluded and Lutherans received religious toleration and would no longer be regarded as heretics. Lutheran princes were granted security
- there is value in seeing how this peace will work. Toleration will be extended to Lutherans living in Catholic areas and vice versa. The secular prince had the right to choose the faith of his territory, Lutheran or Catholic, according to the principle of 'cuius regio eius religio'
- the peace is limited regarding religious acceptance. The agreement extends only to Catholics and Lutherans, no account is taken of the rights of Calvinists or Zwinglians. There is value, therefore, in helping us to understand why religious conflict would persist
- the peace is further limited by geographical recognition. It can be seen as an attempt to confine the gains the Lutherans have made to the position as it stands in 1555, any changes beyond that date will not be recognised. There is value in seeing how this arrangement was unlikely to stand the test of time.

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

Provenance, tone and emphasis

- this is the abdication speech of the Holy Roman Emperor in which he endeavours to justify himself and address the difficulties of ruling over a vast empire. By 1556, Charles was physically and mentally exhausted, he regarded the role as too much for one person to accomplish
- Charles had to concede religious toleration to Lutherans the year before. Despite his role as a defender of the Catholic faith, we can see the evidence that he had failed in his mission
- Charles recognises the impossibility of reuniting Christendom and is seeking to show he was behaving honourably with a strong sense of duty. Charles tries to defend his record and reputation by referring to the context of other wars as the reasons he was unable to succeed
- the tone is weary/tired/exhausted. The job has proven too much for one man therefore, there is value in demonstrating the association between his state of mind and his actions.

Content and argument

- Charles sought to carry out his Christian duties. His was more than a secular role; his responsibility was also to safeguard the one religion of the Empire. We therefore have some understanding of the role of the Holy Roman Emperor at this time
- Charles infers betrayal. The suggestion is that he has been let down by the ambitions of the German princes who have used religion as a mask for their secular ambition. Because of them, Charles has been frustrated in securing peace. We gain valuable insight into the turmoil of these times
- Charles has a strong sense of duty. He suggests he might have abdicated previously but could not leave Germany in a state of turmoil, we therefore gain a valuable understanding of his mindset
- Charles acknowledges the scale of the job is too much for any one person to succeed in. The consequence of this is that his lands and responsibilities are to be divided up between his son, Philip and his brother, Ferdinand.

Section B

0 2 'In c1517, the financial demands of the Church were a cause of widespread resentment.'

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.

Arguments supporting the view that in c1517, the financial demands of the Church were a cause of widespread resentment might include:

- ‘Indulgence inflation’ meant the scale of financial demands was increasing. The Church had begun to offer indulgences backed by more extravagant claims regarding their utility. Indulgences offered for souls already assumed to be in purgatory was a new development. The behaviour of Tetzel in Germany provided a breaking point
- the money required for the building of St Peter’s exaggerated the need for increased revenues. Julius II had decided to build the greatest church in the world
- the priesthood had long enjoyed tax privileges. Given the questionable abilities of many priests this became a more obvious injustice. Furthermore, the sale of church posts, ie simony, was rife by this time
- priests were poorly paid and this had implications for other ‘abuses’. Many were motivated to seek work in a variety of parishes and so this gave rise to the increased sense that absenteeism was becoming a more acute problem
- papal taxes (Peter’s Pence or Annates) became an ever more contentious issue for secular rulers in the decade prior to the Reformation and this seemed to be most acutely felt in Germany, largely due to the existence of the prince-bishops there. Local authorities were tasked with collection of church taxes adding to their unpopularity.

Arguments challenging the view that in c1517, the financial demands of the Church were a cause of widespread resentment might include:

- Indulgences were popular. They were an easy way to secure salvation, they provided genuine comfort and an apparently tangible method of assisting dead relatives
- the many forms of ‘giving’ to the Church were unabated. There was no evidence that the money offered to the Church by the laity, such as, gifts, endowments or bequests, was showing any sign of slow down. Many provided this at the point of death, anxious to benefit their soul through their charity
- financial exploitation was not a systemic problem. Many regarded this as the work of rogue individuals such as Tetzel or Albert of Brandenburg. Luther took the initial view that if only the Pope knew what was being exacted in his name, he would do something about it
- the payment of Tithes was an accepted responsibility. Good works were considered the way to salvation, paying money to the Church, in whatever form, was good works in action
- guilds or confraternities served both a secular and religious function. In return for an annual subscription, members were assured that prayers would be said for them. They provided opportunities for people to come together and remember the dead and they were popular.

There is no evidence of any sustained campaigns on the matter of taxation on eve of Reformation. That said it appears that much of the financial burden fell on Germany and this may well account for the alacrity with which Lutheranism was adopted by many German princes as it provided the opportunity to be independent of Rome. This would have affected both princes and individual towns. Therefore, there is an argument to suggest that the strain on the pockets of the population at this time varied and therefore would depend upon where you lived.

- 0 3** To what extent was Luther responsible for the development of Protestant doctrine in the years 1524 to 1531?

[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.

Arguments supporting the view that Luther was responsible for the development of Protestant doctrine in the years 1524 to 1531 might include:

- the idea that Erasmus laid the egg that Luther hatched lost its momentum in 1524. Erasmus published his 'Discourse on Free Will', Luther replied with the 'Bondage of the Will'. Lutheranism was becoming far more distinct from any humanist influences
- Luther showed determination to exert control of doctrine in the face of challenges. From 1526, Zwingli and Luther were increasingly at odds with each other. This culminated in Luther rebuffing Zwingli at Marburg, 1529, regarding a real or symbolic presence during the Eucharist
- Luther's personal prestige was at its height by 1531. He worked relentlessly at this time delivering thousands of sermons. By 1526 there was a German mass, by 1529 a German catechism
- despite exerting some degree of independence, Melancthon worked closely with Luther to provide lucidity. At first Luther distanced himself from the Augsburg Confession (too conciliatory) but later supported it
- the Augsburg Confession was a key landmark for the Protestants but also a personal triumph for Luther. It marked the emergence of a coherent Protestant faith capable of resisting the enmity of the Emperor and the Pope.

Arguments challenging the view that Luther was responsible for the development of Protestant doctrine in the years 1524 to 1531 might include:

- the Peasants' War 1524/5 appeared as an attempt to attach Lutheran doctrine to a form of Protestantism for which he had no kinship with, he was at pains to distance himself from any association in his 'Address to the German Nobility'
- the radical reformation was furthered in Switzerland by the cause of the Anabaptists under the leadership of Karlstadt and Müntzer. While accepting a great deal of Lutheran doctrine there were key distinctions, most importantly their rejection of infant baptism.
- further new divisions of Protestantism emerged during the 1520s. Zwingli's work initially allowed for a Swiss version of Lutheranism to develop. Basle became a reforming city in 1529 under the influence of Oecolampadius. Martin Bucer developed his own interpretation in Strasburg
- Philipp Melancthon created a definitive statement of Protestant doctrine when he wrote the Augsburg Confession in 1530. In fact, in seeking a compromise with Charles V, Melancthon dropped one of Luther's key ideas, the priesthood of all believers
- by his own admission, Luther was a wayward thinker. It was Melancthon who was able to provide an organised and systematic theology which Luther gratefully acknowledged.

Luther was responsible for a prodigious output of work during this period which was marked by the moulding of his writing into something more coherent and organised; in this, Luther was indebted to the work of his followers and associates. They helped to organise his thoughts but also provided practical structures so that by 1531, Lutheranism showed all the signs of a newly organised religion. Others took Lutheran doctrine in a direction he did not desire or just did not agree with. They may have started out as early adopters of Lutheran thought but some of them broke away and developed other forms of Protestant Reformation which Luther rejected and worked vigorously to counteract. Therefore, there is some loss of control at this stage.

0 4 'The Council of Trent successfully strengthened the Catholic Church.'

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

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.

Arguments supporting the view that the Council of Trent successfully strengthened the Catholic Church might include:

- the Church explicitly countered the indulgences issue, this had proved a spark in 1517. The office of indulgence seller was abolished although the practice was not
- key doctrine, which had been attacked by Luther, was reasserted through the Tridentine Decrees. For instance, on the separateness of the priesthood and regarding the seven sacraments
- the centrality of the Latin Vulgate was re-affirmed. The Vulgate remained the source of authority as it was considered free of error. The Mass itself remained in Latin
- the core Lutheran belief in justification by faith alone was repudiated. The role of free will and good works was re-affirmed. The primacy of the Pope was now clearly evident, for instance the Council's decrees required his official blessing
- the training of the clergy became properly organised. Seminaries were created to properly educate the clergy thus addressing a core criticism of the reformers. Roles within the Catholic hierarchy now had clarity. The expectations of a bishop or a parish priest were clearly spelt out.

Arguments challenging the view that the Council of Trent successfully strengthened the Catholic Church might include:

- despite the appearance of renewal, the Catholic Church did not reform itself. Nepotism had continued under Pope Paul IV, the continuation of a Renaissance tradition. Therefore, more important work occurred elsewhere such as with the Jesuits
- the Curia remained generally corrupt. Therefore, the abuses of the Church, such an important issue in stimulating the Reformation, remained untouched
- absenteeism remained a serious problem. Cardinals were especially reluctant to return to their dioceses for fear of diminishing their influence with the Pope. Despite the creation of seminaries, the effectiveness of the priesthood remained largely unregulated
- some Catholic doctrine was ignored. Priestly celibacy, the role of a vernacular liturgy for instance
- the Council could do nothing about the spread of the Reformation to England and the reality that the Catholic Church was excluded from parts of the Empire and had to compete with territorial rulers for authority.

Overall, the Council provided much needed coherence and sober thinking so that by 1564, when the Council's decrees were confirmed by Pope Pius IV, this no longer appeared as a defensive response to Protestantism. After Trent there was no argument regarding what Catholic doctrine was. However, the world had changed by this stage and Popes faced resistance from territorial leaders. The reforms were too Rome-centred with the localities rather than the Curia a target. Selective Catholic doctrine was reaffirmed but some aspects were glossed over. It could be argued that the impact of Trent was less important than work occurring outside of the Council, such as that of the Jesuits.