

Component 3: Historical investigation (non-exam assessment)

The Historical investigation contributes towards meeting the aims and objectives of the A-level specification.

Students will be required to submit a Historical investigation based on a development or issue which has been subject to different historical interpretations.

The Historical investigation must:

- be independently researched and written by the student
- be presented in the form of a piece of extended writing no more than 4,500 words in length
- draw upon the student's investigation of contemporary sources which relate to the development or issue chosen and the differing interpretations that have been placed on this
- place the issue to be investigated within a context of approximately 100 years

Completion of the Historical investigation

- The Investigation should be completed in approximately 4,500 words, excluding bibliography and footnotes.
- The Investigation must contain an evaluation of at least three primary sources. At least two different types of primary source should be evaluated. These may be different types of written primary sources, for example: official publications; reports; diaries; speeches; letters; chronicles; observations of elite or 'ordinary' people (from the inside or from the outside). Other appropriate sources may include artefacts, archaeological or visual sources.
- The Investigation must also demonstrate an understanding of differing interpretations presented by two academic historians about the issue.
- Students are advised to avoid extensive, verbatim copying from sources and to ensure that the investigation is written in their own words. Extensive verbatim copying can lead to malpractice.
- The use of footnotes is strongly advised in order to demonstrate the range of evidence consulted and validate the bibliography. Additionally, footnotes alleviate concerns about plagiarism, as the source of comments, views, detail or others' judgements is acknowledged. Skill in the use of footnotes is also highly valued by Higher Education. A bibliography should be provided, listing the sources that have been consulted.

Assessment and moderation

The Historical investigation will be marked by me and moderated by AQA.

The work of students is to be assessed by a levels of response mark scheme which addresses each of the following assessment objectives, with the weighting as indicated:

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.

Maximum Mark 20

AO2: Analyse and evaluate appropriate source material, primary and/or contemporary to the period, within the historical context.

Maximum Mark 10

AO3: Analyse and evaluate, in relation to the historical context, different ways in which aspects of the past have been interpreted.

Maximum Mark 10

Mark Scheme used when assessing the Historical investigation

AO1: 20 marks

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 and significance.

Level 5: 17 – 20 This is what YOU are aiming for!

The response demonstrates a very good understanding of change and continuity within the context of approximately 100 years and meets the full demands of the chosen question. It is very well organised and effectively delivered. The supporting information is well-selected, specific and precise. It shows a very good understanding of key features, issues and concepts. The answer is fully analytical with a balanced argument and well-substantiated judgement.

Level 4: 13 – 16

The response demonstrates a good understanding of change and continuity within the context of approximately 100 years and meets the demands of the chosen question. It is well-organised and effectively communicated. There is a range of clear and specific supporting information, showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The response is predominantly analytical in style with a range of direct comment relating to the question. The response is well-balanced with some judgement, which may, however, be only partially substantiated.

Level 3: 9 – 12

The response demonstrates an understanding of change and continuity within the context of approximately 100 years and shows an understanding of the chosen question. It provides a range of largely accurate information which shows an awareness of some of the key issues. This information may, however, be unspecific or lack precision of detail in parts. The response is effectively organised and shows adequate communication skills. There is a good deal of comment in relation to the chosen question, although some of this may be generalised. The response demonstrates some analytical qualities and balance of argument.

Level 2: 5 – 8

The response demonstrates some understanding of change and continuity but may have limitations in its coverage of a context of approximately 100 years. The response may be either descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the chosen question but a failure

to grasp its full demands. There is some attempt to convey material in an organised way although communication skills may be limited. The response contains some appropriate information and shows an understanding of some aspects of the investigation, but there may be some inaccuracy and irrelevance. There is some comment in relation to the question but comments may be unsupported and generalised.

Level 1: 1 – 4

The response demonstrates limited understanding of change and continuity and makes little reference to a context of approximately 100 years. The chosen question has been imperfectly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is extremely limited in scope and parts may be irrelevant. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalised comment.

AO2: 10 marks

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

Level 5: 9 – 10 This is what YOU are aiming for!

Provides a range of relevant and well-supported comments on the value of at least three sources of two or more different types used in the investigation to provide a balanced and convincing judgement on their merits in relation to the topic under investigation.

Level 4: 7 – 8

Provides relevant and well-supported comments on the value of three or more sources of two or more different types used in the investigation, to produce a balanced assessment on their merits in relation to the topic under investigation. Judgements may, however, be partial or limited in substantiation.

Level 3: 5 – 6

Provides some relevant comment on the value of three sources of at least two different types used in the investigation. Some of the commentary is, however, of limited scope, not fully convincing or has only limited direction to the topic under investigation.

Level 2: 3 – 4

Either: provides some comment on the value of more than one source used in the investigation but may not address three sources in equal measure or refers to sources of the same 'type'. Or: provides some comment on the value of three sources of at least two types used in the investigation but the comment is excessively generalised and not well directed to the topic of the investigation.

Level 1: 1 – 2

Provides some comment on the value of at least one source used in the investigation but the response is very limited and may be partially inaccurate. Comments are likely to be unsupported, vague or generalised. In commenting and making judgements on the value of the sources, students will be expected to apply their own contextual knowledge and perspectives of time and place in order to assess the value and limitations of their sources

as evidence. They will be expected to comment on, as appropriate to the investigation and chosen sources:

- the differing perspectives of the sources chosen
- the social, political, intellectual, religious and/or economic contexts in which the sources were written
- the credibility, authority, authenticity, consistency and comprehensiveness of the sources
- the bias, distortion or propagandist elements found in the sources.

A03: 10 marks

Analyse and evaluate, in relation to the historical context, different ways in which aspects of the past have been interpreted.

Level 5: 9 – 10

Shows a very good understanding of the differing historical interpretations raised by the question. There is a strong, well-substantiated and convincing evaluation of two interpretations with reference to the time and/or context and the limitations placed on the historians.

Level 4: 7 – 8

Shows a good understanding of the differing historical interpretations raised by the question. There is some good evaluation of the two interpretations with reference to the time and/or context and the limitations placed on historians, although not all comments are substantiated or convincing.

Level 3: 5 – 6

Shows an understanding of differing historical interpretations raised by the question. There is some supported comment on two interpretations with reference to the time and/or context and the limitations placed on historians, but the comments are limited in depth and/or substantiation.

Level 2: 3 – 4

Shows some understanding of the differing historical interpretations raised by the question. They may refer to either the time and/or context or to the limitations placed on the historians, or to both in an unconvincing way.

Level 1: 1 – 2

Shows limited understanding of the differing historical interpretations raised by the question. Comment on historical interpretations is generalised and vague.

In showing an understanding of historical interpretations and evaluating historical interpretations, students will be expected to apply their own contextual knowledge.

They will be expected, as appropriate to the investigation:

- to show an understanding of the limitations placed on historians
- to show an understanding of the significance of the time and/or context in which an historian writes
- to compare and evaluate differing historical interpretations.

