

A-LEVEL

# History

Component 2M Wars and Welfare: Britain in Transition, 1906–1957  
Mark scheme

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June 2017

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

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.

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June 2017

A-level

Component 2M Wars and Welfare: Britain in Transition, 1906–1957

### Section A

- 01** With reference to these sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying the formation of the National government on 24 August 1931. **[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

- from the Cabinet Minutes which should be a factual and reliable account of what was said in the Cabinet meeting of 23 August (although minutes are not always entirely accurate)
- the date of the source is significant as the day after this meeting MacDonald went to Buckingham Palace to tender the resignation of the Labour government to the King
- the tone of the source is objective as an official record, e.g. the use of ‘Prime Minister’ and ‘Ministers’ rather than any specific names.

### Content and argument

- the financial circumstances of August 1931 are referenced in the first paragraph
- MacDonald was reluctantly in favour of a 10% cut to unemployment benefit, which he and Snowden felt would provide sufficient confidence in the government’s finances to attract foreign investment
- MacDonald threatened that the government would have to resign if the Cabinet was split. A significant number of ministers, such as Henderson, declared that they would resign in opposition to the proposed cut
- the source is valuable in revealing what was discussed within the Labour Cabinet and the reasons for its collapse; the reasons for the formation of the subsequent National government are not revealed.

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

### Provenance, tone and emphasis

- the source is written by those elements of the Labour movement who regarded MacDonald as a traitor for forming the National government and therefore provides their interpretation
- the source is dated four days after the formation of the National government so is a fairly immediate response to events and reveals the strength of feeling at the time
- as a ‘manifesto’ published for a public audience, the tone of the source is strident and emotive seeking to win support for the Labour movement’s interpretation of the events of August 1931. As such, it is prone to some exaggeration and use of sweeping statements.

### Content and argument

- the source claims that the National government was acting without authority from the people. However, the new government did command a majority in Parliament, and indeed went on to win the October 1931 election convincingly
- the source provides a clear socialist interpretation of events focusing on the influence of private banking interests and sections of the Press. There is some value in this argument as foreign investors were insisting on cuts to government spending before considering loans
- the focus on ‘serious cuts’ to be implemented by the new government has some value, as the 10% cut to unemployment benefit was introduced in Snowden’s Emergency Budget, along with other cuts to public spending, less than two weeks later
- it is not wholly accurate to state that the ‘entire Labour movement’ was in opposition, as a small number of Labour MPs followed MacDonald and Snowden into the National government
- to state that ‘Nothing could be further from the truth’ in relation to Britain’s financial position is a rather sweeping statement. There were clearly serious issues with regard to the run on the pound and the government’s budget deficit which needed addressing urgently in August 1931.

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

### Provenance, tone and emphasis

- as a right-wing newspaper, *The Times*, provides a favourable interpretation of the formation of the National government as it was a development which brought the Conservatives back into power and led to a policy of retrenchment of which *The Times* approved
- as a newspaper seeking to influence the views of its readers and wider public opinion, the source provides a certain interpretation of events and seeks to persuade people to support the National government
- the tone of the source is upbeat and positive. The emphasis is on the political parties coming together in the national interest with courage and patriotism, which is certainly how the formation of the National government was viewed by many in the country.

### Content and argument

- the source emphasises the patriotic spirit involved in the formation of the National government which accords with MacDonald’s statement in Source A, that he believed the cut to unemployment benefit to be in the national interest. However, those in the Labour movement, e.g. in Source B, would disagree
- it is fair to argue that MacDonald, Snowden and colleagues ‘took their political lives in their hands’ when forming the National government as this caused an irrevocable split between them and their former party
- the argument that MacDonald ‘forced’ the break-up of the previous Labour government is more open to debate. In discussions, such as that in the Cabinet in Source A, MacDonald’s preferred outcome was surely that the Labour government could agree on a unified course of action in response to the financial crisis and therefore continue in power
- the source reveals its support for a policy of retrenchment. In the immediate future, however, the policy was not guaranteed of success. Indeed Snowden’s Emergency Budget was not successful in attracting foreign investment due to the Invergordon Mutiny and the fervent opposition of the Labour Party in Parliament to the Budget.

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**Section B**

- 02** How effectively did British governments deal with the issue of Ireland in the years 1912 to 1921? **[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**

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## 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/factors suggesting that British governments dealt effectively with the issue of Ireland between 1912 and 1921 might include:**

- the passing of the Government of Ireland Act in September 1914, and its immediate suspension for the duration of the war, was enough to prevent any deterioration of the situation in Ireland towards civil war in 1914/15
- Lloyd George's Government of Ireland Act (1920) made a significant contribution to Sinn Fein agreeing to negotiations towards ending the Anglo-Irish War
- Lloyd George demonstrated supreme negotiating skills in 1921 in getting Collins to agree to the Anglo-Irish Treaty using bluff, vague promises and the threat of a resumption of war to get his way
- the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921, in many ways, represented an effective compromise between the demands of the Irish Nationalists, the Ulster Unionists and Lloyd George's Conservative coalition partners.

**Arguments/factors challenging the view that British governments dealt effectively with the issue of Ireland between 1912 and 1921 might include:**

- in 1912 and 1913 the proposed Home Rule Bill and suggested amendments failed to achieve a compromise position between the demands of the Ulster Unionists and the Irish Nationalists
- Asquith's attitude of 'wait and see' in 1913 and 1914 only allowed the situation in Ireland to escalate to the point of Civil War as the government appeared hesitant and indecisive over issues such as the Curragh Mutiny and the gun-running of both sides
- the heavy-handed response to the Easter Rising in 1916 was a serious miscalculation, turning the leaders of the rebellion into martyrs of the nationalist cause and enabling those imprisoned in internment camps to organise themselves for the future. The issue of conscription in 1917 merely added to the upsurge in nationalist support for Sinn Fein
- the deployment of the Black and Tans, and their subsequent actions during the Anglo-Irish War, enflamed anti-British opinion in Ireland and caused condemnation from around the world as well as from within Britain
- Lloyd George's Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921 caused the outbreak of a civil war in Ireland.

Overall, students may conclude that the British governments' policies towards Ireland in this period were characterised by indecision or by heavy-handedness; both of which only succeeded in increasing tensions within Ireland, resulting in a series of conflicts throughout which Irish civilians were invariably the main casualties. Alternatively, students may argue that the impasse between the demands of the Irish Nationalists and the Ulster Unionists was so great that it was unrealistic to expect a resolution before the outbreak of the First World War. It could be argued that it was the impact of war, rather than the actions of the British government, which transformed Irish nationalist opinion up to 1918 and that, in the circumstances of the Anglo-Irish War which followed, Lloyd George's ultimate solution was the best anyone could have achieved at the time.

- 03** To what extent was the Conservatives' victory in the 1924 election due to the weaknesses of Labour? **[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**
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- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**



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## 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/factors suggesting the Conservatives' election victory in 1924 was due to the weaknesses of Labour might include:**

- Labour disappointed the hopes of many of its supporters in 1924 by not introducing any significant social welfare policies; by not tackling unemployment directly; and by failing to improve industrial relations
- Labour opened itself up to criticisms of being too left-wing through the negotiations for a commercial deal with the USSR and through its poor handling of the Campbell Case
- Labour was still a relatively new party and had not developed as comprehensive a network of local agents and constituency offices as the Conservatives by 1924
- the vast majority of Labour's votes came from the working class and the party was still unable to reach out and appeal to voters in other social groups.

**Arguments/factors challenging the view that the Conservatives' election victory in 1924 was due to the weaknesses of Labour might include:**

- the Zinoviev Letter had a big impact on the outcome of the election polarising opinion away from the Liberals, which worked more in the favour of the Conservatives
- Labour actually increased their share of the vote in 1924, although this was not reflected in the distribution of seats
- the weaknesses of the Liberals was a major factor behind the Conservative landslide. This included memories of Lloyd George's post-war government as well as the split with Asquith which had only superficially healed
- the Conservatives had their own strengths such as their level of funding; the support of the majority of the press; the extensive network of local agents and volunteers; Baldwin's leadership
- the system of voting from 1918 also helped the Conservatives – they had the support of many of the new female voters; plural voting had been retained; and boundary changes had created new constituencies favourable to them.

Overall, students may conclude that by 1924 Labour were the only party realistically capable of challenging the Conservatives and that, due to their own weaknesses, they were not in a position to do that effectively in 1924. Alternatively, students may conclude that other factors apart from Labour's weaknesses played a more significant role in the Conservatives' victory, perhaps the decline of the Liberals or the appeal of Baldwin and the Conservatives themselves.

- 04** ‘The economic and financial policies of the Conservatives in the years 1951 to 1957 were merely a continuation of Labour’s.’

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/factors suggesting that the economic and financial policies of the Conservatives in the years 1951 to 1957 were merely a continuation of Labour's might include:**

- the Conservatives' 'Industrial Charter' of 1947 accepted the mixed economy established by Labour after 1945. The Conservatives retained the majority of Labour's nationalised industries after 1951
- the Conservatives were comfortable with a Keynesian approach to the economy after 1951 and continued to spend a significant proportion of government expenditure on social welfare, e.g. on the NHS and on housing
- initially, Butler retained Labour's approach of restricting consumer demand in order to reduce imports and create a more favourable balance of payments
- in 1954, the term 'Butskellism' was coined to suggest there was little difference between the economic and financial policies of Butler and Gaitskell.

**Arguments/factors challenging the view that the economic and financial policies of the Conservatives in the years 1951 to 1957 were merely a continuation of Labour's might include:**

- the Conservatives denationalised the iron and steel industries and road haulage after coming to power in 1951
- Butler turned a budget deficit of £300 million into a surplus of £700 million within 18 months by introducing a number of cuts to the civil service and other government expenditure
- the Conservatives fought the 1950 and 1951 elections on a platform of freeing the economy from socialist controls. In 1954, the Conservatives delivered on their commitment to end rationing and price controls
- Butler introduced generous tax cuts in his 1955 Budget which was a move away from the higher levels of taxation under Labour
- in the 1955 election, the Conservatives continued to portray Labour as the party of austerity and themselves as the party of economic freedom and growth.

Overall, students might conclude that the impression at the time was that there were many similarities between the policies of Labour and the Conservatives in this period. Most notably, this was due to the Conservatives' acceptance of the mixed economy and Keynesian principles. The term 'Butskellism' is a clear reference to this continuity in financial and economic policy. However, the years 1954 and 1955 could be seen as something of a turning point as the Conservatives ended rationing, and Butler introduced tax cuts, enabling them to portray themselves as the party of economic growth in contrast to the austerity of Labour's years.