

Paper 2 A Level Exam Technique

Paper 2 A Level General Guidance, Assessment Models and Question stems and targets for Section A and B, Exam Technique.

Introduction

This guide has a number of distinct sections.

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7 Paper 2 A Level Section B Question 5 or 6 essays in depth **Mark schemes**

8 Paper 2 A Level Section B Question 5 or 6 essays in depth **Exam Technique**

1 Paper 2 A Level General Guidance

1. The exam is 1 hour 30 mins long and is worth 20% at A Level.

2. In A Level Section A (AO2) as one compulsory question which requires you to analyse and evaluate the weight of two sources for a specified enquiry. In A Level Section B (AO1) of the exam tests your ability to recall, select and deploy historical knowledge and understanding and the ability to make substantiated judgements of the topic using historical concepts (change, continuity, cause and consequence, similarity and difference and significance). The A Level Section B (AO1) as a choice of two questions. Question can relate to a single year or event or to longer periods within the study.

3 Timing is crucial to your success.

i) You should spend 45 minutes answering Section A, 45 minutes answering Section B essay. The timing is the same for each Section A and B for A Level.

ii) Plan answers to each of the questions 2 minutes each. Underline and fix in your mind the key words and make sure that you stick to them.

iii) You should then start to answer the questions. Make sure that you employ the exact technique of extended writing advised in this detailed guidance for each type of question which will require an introduction, a number of main parts that analyse and evaluate the question and a conclusion. The final sentence of each the main parts in your answers should be a summary of the significance of your analysis in answering the question as a whole.

2 Paper 2 A Level Section A and B Summary of Assessment Model

AS	A level
<p>Section A: One compulsory question in two parts, (a) and (b). Each part based on a one source that is primary and/or contemporary to the period.</p> <p>AO2 Part (a) Analysis and evaluation of source for its value to historian for a specified enquiry. Part (b) Analysis and evaluation of source for how much weight can be placed on evidence for a specified enquiry.</p>	<p>Section A: One compulsory question, based on two sources.</p> <p>AO2 Students analyse and evaluate the two sources for how far they can be used to answer a specified enquiry.</p>
<p>Section B: One essay from choice of three. Questions target analysis and evaluation. AO1 – all concepts in scope. Questions can relate to a single year/event or to longer periods within the study.</p>	<p>Section B: One essay from choice of two. AO1 only – all concepts in scope. Questions target analysis and evaluation. Questions can relate to a single year/event or to longer periods within the study.</p>

3 Paper 2 A Level Sections A Question 1: Question stems and targets

In A level, Section A is assessment of AO2: a question using source material. This new specification separates out the testing of interpretations from the use of primary/contemporary source material. The new specification requires more extensive deployment of knowledge of historical context as part of the analysis, explanation and evaluation of source material.

Questions are based on primary sources or on sources contemporary to the period of study, for example from medieval chroniclers who provide us with contemporary accounts of events in which they were not participants. One of the sources used in question 1 at A level may be a visual source. Analysis and evaluation of the source material will require knowledge of the historical context. It can be seen from the sample assessment materials that the sources relate to a central named figure, group, event or major feature, issue, development specified in the content. It is not expected, however, that students will have prior knowledge of all the individuals or events to which the source material relates. Where the author is not a named figure in the specification content or where references in the sources need to be understood, additional details are provided in the provenance or in a glossary beneath the source

Paper 2 A Level Section A Question 2 Question stems

Study Sources 3 and 4 in the Sources Booklet before you answer this question.

2 How far could the historian make use of Sources 3 and 4 together to investigate the problems facing the Tsarist system during the First World War?

Explain your answer, using both sources, the information given about them and your own knowledge of the historical context.

4 Paper 2 A Level Section A Question 2 Mark scheme

Section A For A level, the questions in Section A target AO2 and the mark scheme identify progression in three separate elements or traits:

- Interpretation and analysis of source material.
- Deployment of knowledge of historical context in relation to the sources.
- Evaluation of source material.

Paper 2 A Level question 2 Similar principles with regard to progression from AS to A level can be seen in the level descriptions as with the AO1 level descriptions in Paper 1. There is an additional Level 5 at A level and a longer 'ladder', but in this case the AS students gain fewer marks for similar performance in Levels 1–4, because they are required to deal only with a single source in demonstrating these qualities.

A	A Level Section A Compulsory Question
L1 1–3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates surface level comprehension of the source material without analysis, selecting some material relevant to the question, but in the form of direct quotations or paraphrases. • Some relevant contextual knowledge is included, with limited linkage to the source material. • Evaluation of the source material is assertive with little or no supporting evidence. Concepts of reliability or utility may be addressed, but by making stereotypical judgements.
L2 4–7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates some understanding and attempts analysis of the source material by selecting and summarising information and making undeveloped inferences relevant to the question. • Contextual knowledge is added to information from the source material to expand, confirm or challenge matters of detail. • Evaluation of the source material is related to the specified enquiry but with limited support for judgement. Concepts of reliability or utility are addressed mainly by noting aspects of source provenance and judgements may be based on questionable assumptions.
L3 8– 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates understanding of the source material and shows some analysis by selecting key points relevant to the question, explaining their meaning and selecting material to support valid inferences. • Deploys knowledge of the historical context to explain or support inferences as well as to expand, confirm or challenge matters of detail. • Evaluation of the source material is related to the specified enquiry and explanation of utility takes into account relevant considerations such as nature or purpose of the source material or the position of the author. <p>Judgements are based on valid criteria but with limited justification.</p>
L4 13– 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyses the source material, interrogating the evidence to make reasoned inferences and to show a range of ways the material can be used, for example by distinguishing between information and claim or opinion, although treatment of the two sources may be uneven. • Deploys knowledge of the historical context to illuminate and/or discuss the limitations of what can be gained from the content of the source material, displaying some understanding of the need to interpret source material in the context of the values and concerns of the society from which it is drawn. • Evaluation of the source material uses valid criteria which are justified and applied, although some of the evaluation may be weakly substantiated. Evaluation takes into account the weight the evidence will bear as part of coming to a judgement.
L5 17–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interrogates the evidence of both sources with confidence and discrimination, making reasoned inferences and showing a range of ways the material can be used, for example by distinguishing between information and claim or opinion. • Deploys knowledge of the historical context to illuminate and/or discuss the limitations of what can be gained from the content of the source material, displaying secure understanding of the need to interpret source material in the context of the values and concerns of the society from which it is drawn. • Evaluation of the source material uses valid criteria which are justified and fully applied. Evaluation takes into account the weight the evidence will bear as part of coming to a judgement and, where appropriate, distinguishes between the degrees of certainty with which aspects of it can be used as the basis for claims.

5 A Level Section A Compulsory Question Technique. Assessment of two sources for significance for a particular enquiry 50 minutes.

Introduction: Whilst acknowledging the limitations of sources 1 and 2 in terms of their content and provenance for an enquiry into X, it is argued that together there are particular strengths for revealing elements of X. **1 Min**

Part 1 Source 1 as strengths and limitations in terms of Provenance (NOP) for the enquiry into X. There are some limitations of the content in coverage of X, support with contextual knowledge. These limitations need to be considered in reaching a conclusion on how far they are useful for an enquiry into X. **10 mins**

Part 2 Source 2 as strengths and limitations in terms of Provenance (NOP) for the enquiry into X. There are some limitations of the content in coverage of X, support with contextual knowledge. These limitations need to be considered in reaching a conclusion on how far they are useful for an enquiry into X. **10 mins**

Part 3 However used together they are particularly revealing about this element1 of X. For example source 1 suggests "" and source 2 suggests. This is supported by contextual knowledge. In addition source 1 suggests "" and source 2 suggests. This is supported by contextual knowledge. Used together therefor the sources are particularly useful for revealing this element of X. **10 mins**

Part 4 Furthermore used together they are give significant insight about this element2 of X. For example source 1 suggests "" and source 2 suggests. This is supported by contextual knowledge. In addition source 1 suggests "" and source 2 suggests. This is supported by contextual knowledge. Used together therefor the sources are particularly useful for an insight into this element of X. **10 mins**

Conclusion: In conclusion therefor, whilst acknowledging the limitations of the sources it is argued that used together the sources are revealing about element1 and show insight into element2 in relation to an enquiry into X. The provenance of these sources enhances the significance of this observation. **3 mins**

6 Paper 2 A Level Section B essays in depth Question Stems

Essays in Section B of Paper 2 require depth of knowledge as well as breadth. Questions may focus on a single year or event, or cover the whole chronology of the depth study. The essays target AO1 and the same range of stems is used as above and additionally students may be given a statement to assess. This may relate to any of the second-order concepts. When students are asked to what extent they agree with a statement, they should clarify what the statement is about. For example: Does it relate to the significance of an event? Does it relate to causes consequences or changes? Does it offer a comparison for students to assess? For example, the question “‘In the years 1789– 91, Louis XVI’s authority was only seriously undermined after his flight to Varennes.” How far do you agree with this statement?’ asks for an analysis of the significance of Varennes in the process of change and an assessment of change and continuity in the authority of the King.

Paper 2 Section B AS/ A level differentiation

The same principles are used as for Paper 1 Section B. The questions at A level have less prompting and tend to make more complex demands in their phrasing. The mark schemes have a greater expectation of performance at A level. Paper 2

7 Paper 2 A Level Section B Mark schemes

The same AO1 level descriptions are used for Paper 2 as for Paper 1. A greater depth of knowledge is expected in Paper 2 to fulfil the criteria for sufficient depth and supporting evidence in the level descriptors, and this is reflected in the more developed points provided in the indicative content, but the essential hierarchy of attainment in terms of analysis and evaluation applies in both papers.

A Level	
L1 1–3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple or generalised statements are made about the topic. • Some accurate and relevant knowledge is included, but it lacks range and depth and does not directly address the question. • The overall judgement is missing or asserted. • There is little, if any, evidence of attempts to structure the answer and the answer overall lacks coherence and precision.
L2 4–7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptive statements are made about key features of the period which are relevant to the topic in general terms, but they display limited analysis and are not clearly shown to relate to the question. • Mostly accurate and relevant knowledge is included, but it lacks range or depth and has only implicit links to the demands and conceptual focus of the question. • An overall judgement is given but with limited substantiation and the criteria for judgement are left implicit. • The answer shows some attempts at organisation, but most of the answer is lacking in coherence, clarity and precision.
L3 8–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptive passages are included, but there is some analysis and an attempt to explain links between the relevant key features of the period and the question. • Mostly accurate and relevant knowledge is included to demonstrate some understanding of the demands and conceptual focus of the question, but material lacks range or depth. • Attempts are made to establish criteria for judgement and to relate the overall judgement to them, although with weak substantiation. • The answer shows some organisation. The general trend of the argument is clear, but parts of it lack logic, coherence and precision.
L4 13–16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key issues relevant to the question are explored by an analysis of the relationships between key features of the period, although treatment of issues may be uneven. • Sufficient knowledge is deployed to demonstrate understanding of the demands and conceptual focus of the question, and to meet most of its demands. • Valid criteria by which the question can be judged are established and applied in the process of coming to a judgement. Although some of the evaluations may be only partly substantiated, the overall judgement is supported. • The answer is generally well organised. The argument is logical and is communicated with clarity, although in a few places it may lack coherence and precision.
L5 17–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key issues relevant to the question are explored by a sustained analysis of the relationships between key features of the period. • Sufficient knowledge is deployed to demonstrate understanding of the demands and conceptual focus of the question, and to respond fully to its demands. • Valid criteria by which the question can be judged are established and applied and their relative significance evaluated in the process of reaching and substantiating the overall judgement. • The answer is well organised. The argument is logical and coherent throughout and is communicated with clarity and precision.

8 Paper 2 AS and A Level Section B Question 5 or 6 Exam Technique 40 mins

A Level Question 5 or 6 Technique

Unlike in Paper 1, essays in Section B of Paper 2 require depth of knowledge as well as breadth. Questions may focus on a single year or event, or cover the whole chronology of the depth study. The essays target AO1 and the same range of stems for AS are used as in Section B of Paper 1. For A level, the same range of stems is used as above and additionally students may be given a statement to assess. This may relate to any of the second-order concepts. When students are asked to what extent they agree with a statement, they should clarify what the statement is about. For example: Does it relate to the significance of an event? Does it relate to causes consequences or changes? Does it offer a comparison for students to assess? For example, the question “In the years 1789– 91, Louis XVI’s authority was only seriously undermined after his flight to Varennes.” How far do you agree with this statement?’ asks for an analysis of the significance of Varennes in the process of change and an assessment of change and continuity in the authority of the King. The same principles are used as for Paper 1 Section B. The questions at A level have less prompting and tend to make more complex demands in their phrasing. The mark schemes have a greater expectation of performance at A level. Paper 2

2 mins planning for top 3 factors, 5 top points for each, and relative significance.

A) Causation/Consequence EG1 To what extent does the emergence of X explain Q in the years 1894–1907? **EG2** How far was Y during the period 1907–17 responsible for Q?

Introduction. X certainly made a significant contribution to Q, along with Y and Z. It is argued that whilst the interaction of these factors were responsible for Q, Z was the most significant factor. **2 minutes**

Part 1 X made a significant contribution to Q. Top 5 points, however it was not sufficient to cause Q without Y and Z because. Its overall contribution was to provide an important stimulus by...**10 minutes**

Part 2 Y and Z also made a significant contribution to Q.

i) Y. Top 5 points, however it was not sufficient to cause Q without X and Z because. Its overall contribution was to provide an important stimulus by...**10 minutes**

ii) Z was the most significant cause. Top 5 points, however it was not sufficient to cause Q without X and Z because. Its overall contribution was to provide an important stimulus by...**10 minutes**

Conclusion The essential interaction of factors along with their relative significance is finally commented upon and conclusions drawn. **6 mins**

B) Change/Continuity EG1 How far do you agree that X was transformed in the years 1914–24? **EG2** How far did X remain in place under Y?

Introduction. X was certainly transformed to some extent. However it is argued that there were limitations to these changes and that there was much continuity . **2 minutes**

Part 1 There was certainly some continuity in X during the years 1914–24 and that changes in these aspects were at best slow. Top 5 points. However this is not to suggest that gradual change was not emerging...**15 minutes**

Part 2 However it is argued that X was certainly transformed to a great extent 1914–24. Top 5 points. However it is suggested that these changes were limited to some extent...**15 minutes**

Conclusion Comment on the complex interaction between factors of change and continuity and the different extent of its speed in different aspects arriving at a conclusion as to how far it could be considered a transformation. **6 mins**

C) Similarity/difference EG1 How far do you agree that X in the years 1894-1914 was more effectively organised Y? How far do you agree that X in the years 1907-14 were radically different from those of Y in the years 1917-24? **EG3** How far do you agree that X 1894-1914 was completely different from that of Y 1917-24?

Introduction. X certainly had many similarities with Y in this period. However it is argued that the differences became more significant and indeed were more prominent over the period. **2 minutes**

Part 1 There was certainly some similarity in X during these years.. Top 5 points. However this is not to suggest that gradual change was not emerging...**15 minutes**

Part 2 However it is argued that X had significant differences during the period that grew over time. Top 5 points. It is suggested that these changes were more prominent by...**15 minutes**

Conclusion Comment on the complex interaction between factors of change and continuity and the different extent of its speed in different aspects arriving at a conclusion as to how the balance of similarity and difference differed over time.**6 mins**

D) Significance EG1 How significant was X in Q in the years 1907–17? **EG2** How far do you agree that X in the years 1907-14 was more effectively organised than A in the years 1914-17?

Introduction. X certainly made a significant contribution to Q, along with Y and Z. It is argued that whilst the interaction of these factors were responsible for Q, Z was the most significant factor. **2 minutes**

Part 1 X made a significant contribution to Q. Top 5 points, however it was not sufficient to explain Q without Y and Z because.... Its overall contribution was to provide an important stimulus by...**10 minutes**

Part 2 Y and Z also made a significant contribution to Q.

i) Y. Top 5 points, however it was not sufficient to cause Q without X and Z because. Its overall contribution was to provide an important stimulus by...**10 minutes**

ii) Z was the most significant cause. Top 5 points, however it was not sufficient to cause Q without X and Z because. Its overall contribution was to provide an important stimulus by...**10 minutes**

Conclusion The essential interaction of factors along with their relative significance is finally commented upon in explaining Q. **6 mins**