

**Section C** In the light of differing interpretations, how convincing do you find the view that, the the Anglican Church and the confessional state had been completely undermined?To explain your answer, analyse and evaluate the material in both extracts, using your own knowledge of the issues.

**Extract 1: From C Hill, The Century of Revolution, published 1961. p123**

The Toleration Act of 1689 finally killed off the old conception of a single state church of which all Englishmen were members. The parish became more exclusively a local government area, whose officers regarded themselves as responsible to secular rather than to ecclesiastical authority. The attempt to punish sin by judicial process was virtually abandoned. The laity had won its centuries long struggle against the church courts. in this respect to the Middle Ages were over. The Toleration Act served a political purpose. it was necessary for National unity and the safety of the regime that dissenters should be allowed freedom of worship. But they remained excluded from political life.

**Extract 2: From J Champion, Toleration and Citizenship in Enlightenment England, published 1999. p123**

To some extent England remained a confessional state. The Toleration Act and succeeding acts in Scotland and Ireland establishing right to public worship to Protestant dissenters, did not break the connection between religious identity and civil rights. Penal laws removed did not enfranchise even Protestant dissenters to participate in local and national office. the Test and Corporations Acts meant that to be fully competent subject all individuals have to swear Oath of Allegiance and supremacy to the Crown and certificate that they had taken Anglican sacraments. The statutory requirements excluded not only the obvious minorities, Catholics, Quakers, Jews, Muslims, atheists, but also many of the more mainstream Protestant dissenters. This compromise between full toleration of a diversity of religious beliefs and the restriction of full civil liberties to the Anglican confession was the result of the theological origins of the Toleration Act itself. The statutory legislation of 1689 was the result of complex and careful negotiation between Anglican and dissenting interests rather than the conclusion of conceptual considerations about the rights of conscience. Such statutory provisions were calculated to avoid much more dangerous alternatives being advanced, the overwhelming imperative was to preserve the authority and legitimacy of the true Anglican religion.

Key	
	<b>Case for. Source.</b> For example source 2 suggests “ <u>+S</u> ” . Use source as evidence and content
	<b>Case for. Knowledge.</b> This can be further supported by <u>K</u>
	<b>Case for. Repeat</b> this pattern 2 or 3 times integrating source analysis and knowledge
	<b>Case for. Corroborate.</b> Finally this is partially supported by sources 1
	<b>Case against.</b> For example source 2 suggests “ <u>+S</u> ” . Use source as evidence and content
	<b>Case against. Knowledge.</b> This can be further supported by <u>K</u>
	<b>Case against. Repeat</b> this pattern once integrating source analysis and knowledge
	<b>Case against. Corroborate.</b> Finally this view is also challenged by source 1 that suggests

**Planning your Answer**

Source 1 supports this view that the Anglican and confessional states was undermined after the Toleration Act 1689 as shown "The Toleration Act of 1689 finally killed off the old conception of a single state church". Source 2 challenges this view suggesting the Toleration Act did not completely undermine the Anglican establishment that had been effective in countries such as Scotland and Ireland, England had however still remained a confessional state shown by "To some extent England remained a confessional state". The most convincing interpretation is that which is supported by source 2.

**Source 1 offers an over simplistic Marxist/Whig view that the confessional state had ended and the age of toleration established** "The Toleration Act of 1689 finally killed off the old conception of a single state church of which all Englishmen were members" although there is in fact evidence to support that it was not entirely a secular state with full freedom and toleration of worship. This view has some minor evidence to support it for example the source states that "The attempt to punish sin by judicial process was virtually abandoned" which suggests that people were no longer punished for branching away from the Anglican Church into Catholic or non-conformist acts of worship, conveying the idea that the confessional state and the Anglican church were in fact undergoing the process of being undermined. This can be further supported by Catholics who had little to fear from William, as he had effectively guaranteed their safety by entering into alliance with a number of Catholic powers against the French in the League of Augsburg in 1686. Furthermore the source includes "The Toleration Act served a political purpose." which effectively suggests that there was a legal requirement to accept the movement from the authority and domination of the Anglican religion to a more formalised and secular state. This can be further supported by historian Christopher Hill who argues that due to the toleration act people who were not sworn to the allegiance of Anglicanism could enjoy life without fear and by the end some allowances had to be made for dissenters now 8% of the population by 1714. Source 2 also supports this by adding "The Toleration Act and succeeding acts in Scotland and Ireland establishing right to public worship to Protestant dissenters" highlighting that the Toleration Act, even if it was not entirely successful had some impact in terms of granting of freedom. **However** this view has some major limitations in terms of the evidence for example the source states that "the parish became more exclusively a local government area, whose officers regarded themselves as responsible to secular rather than to ecclesiastical authority" however as Champion argues this is not entirely correct because to gain public employment or to join parliament, there was no choice but to swear allegiance to the crown and take Anglican communion and there was not a theological debate between MP's and peers before the Toleration Act was passed. It is sometimes seen as a reactionary attempt to maintain order and preserve the Anglican church. Due to this, it is clear that the Anglican church still had an important role and was not effectively undermined. A further limitation is, "it was necessary for National unity and the safety of the regime that dissenters should be allowed freedom of worship" however, national unity was not permitted due to the fact that despite further toleration acts passed in Scotland and Ireland these did not give dissenters the opportunity to participate in national or local government and there was a widespread fear in the royal court that the alternative to Anglican supremacy was a dangerous slide into religious radicalism and social revolution highlighting Champion's view that the Anglican church and the confessional state did still have a central and leading role. This view of significant evolutionary change therefor is over simplistic

**The most convincing view of this controversy** is supported by source 2 which is a revisionist view of limited change suggesting that the Anglican church still had a large grip on power and England remained largely a confessional state. This view has some major evidence to support it, for example both Toleration Acts and succeeding act in Scotland and Ireland 'did not break the connection between religious identity and civil rights' this can be further supported when Toleration Acts were passed in Scotland and Ireland these did not give Catholics or dissenters the opportunity to participate in national or local government. There was a fear in the royal court that the alternative to Anglican Supremacy was a dangerous slide into religious radicalism and social revolution. Source 2 also states that 'the Test and Corporation Acts meant that to be fully complement subject all individual have to swear Oath of Allegiance and supremacy to the crown and certificate that they had taken Anglican sacraments' suggesting the continued Anglican influence that still remained. This shows that to gain public employment or to join parliament, there was no choice but to swear allegiance to the crown and take Anglican communion. Source 1 also supported this view by stating "But they remained excluded from political life" this highlights that the confessional state was still very much an influence within society and made it so that many groups remained restricted by the regulations effectively illustrating that the Anglican church still played a major role and that society had not reached a full state of freedom with regards to worship, religion and so on. **However**, this view has some minor limitations, in that it was not entirely a confessional state as the source suggests. Source 2 mentions how 'England remained a confessional state', although this is argued by Christopher Hill as he states that the church of England could not enforce complete uniformity and that some allowances had to be made for dissenters. Not only this but the source fails to acknowledge that many groups did get some freedom for example the Catholics who didn't fear William because he used his royal authority to influence judges and decrease

church interference with the Catholics. Despite the freedom being limited the source fails to even mention it at all. This is further supported by source 1 which says, 'dissenters should be allowed freedom of worship' suggesting that there was some freedom in religion even if the state remained somewhat confessional it was not entirely a confessional state. This view of partial toleration is therefore more convincing.

Source 1 had effectively argued the fact that the form a confessional state was completely dissolved after the Toleration Act was passed in 1689 and to some extent, this was true because Catholics and non-conformists were no longer expected to attend the Anglican church and the act had certainly made it easier for dissenters to finally worship freely. Furthermore after 1714 the Anglican Church could no longer enforce complete uniformity on various dissenters. However, although the source gave vital arguments in significant changes being the impact of the Toleration Act, it had however excluded its major flaws which had been carefully outlined in source 2. For example, we learn that the Anglican church still had the dominant role due to the fact those who had not sworn an oath to the Anglican church could not participate in local and national office therefore they could not work in any legal position or practice in professions such as medicine. There was also the major fact that the Toleration Act had not been extended to other minority dissenters which was one of its major flaws. Therefore, In conclusion the confessional state had not been completely undermined as a result of the Toleration Act as there were some major parts that needed to be addressed for England to be a non-confessional state.