CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Cambridge O Level

HISTORY **2147/23**

Paper 2 Document Questions **May/June 2026**

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 40

Published

This mark scheme contains the instructions and marking guidance that our examiners used to mark candidate responses for this component.

Before they start marking, examiners complete a standardisation process. They review a range of candidate responses and discuss the mark scheme in detail to agree which answers can and cannot be accepted. Examiners award marks where it is clear that candidate responses have met the requirements of the mark scheme. These requirements may vary between different components or different versions of the same component, depending on the exact requirements of the question and the candidate responses seen during the standardisation process.

Sometimes, our mark schemes may allow marks to be awarded to responses which contain elements that are factually incorrect or for content not covered by the syllabus. We do this in response to the demands of a specific question to support candidates and make sure that our assessments are fair. However, these allowances should not be used as a guide for teaching and learning.

We cannot discuss the mark scheme with schools, and we recommend that schools read the mark scheme together with the assessment material and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

This document consists of **17** printed pages.

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[Turn over

General marking principles

All examiners must apply these marking principles when marking candidate responses.

1	Examiners must award marks for each response in line with: • the specific **content** defined in the mark scheme • the specific **skills** defined in the mark scheme or in the level descriptions • the **standard of response** required as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.
2	Examiners must award **whole marks** (not half marks, or other fractions).
3	Examiners must award marks **positively**. This means that: • marks are not deducted for errors or omissions • marks are awarded for correct/valid answers as defined in the mark scheme and also for **other valid answers** which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme referring to your team leader as appropriate • the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar are judged **only** when the mark scheme indicates that these features are **specifically assessed** in the question. However, the meaning of all responses must be unambiguous.
4	Examiners must **consistently** apply the requirements of the mark scheme and any rules for what to do when candidates have not followed instructions correctly.
5	Examiners must use the **full range of marks** defined in the mark scheme, unless limited by the quality of the candidate responses seen.
6	Examiners must award marks according to the mark scheme and **must not** award marks with grade thresholds or grade descriptions in mind.

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Annotations guidance for centres

Examiners use a system of annotations as a shorthand for communicating their marking decisions to one another. Examiners are trained during the standardisation process on how and when to use annotations. The purpose of annotations is to inform the standardisation and monitoring processes and guide the supervising examiners when they are checking the work of examiners within their team. The meaning of annotations and how they are used is specific to each component and is understood by all examiners who mark the component.

We publish annotations in our mark schemes to help centres understand the annotations they may see on copies of scripts. Note that there may not be a direct correlation between the number of annotations on a script and the mark awarded. Similarly, the use of an annotation may not be an indication of the quality of the response.

The annotations listed below were available to examiners marking this component in this series.

Annotations

Annotation	Meaning
BOD	Benefit of the doubt
✗	Incorrect OR In part (e) questions only, to indicate that a source has been correctly identified as refuting the statement
✓	Correct OR In part (e) questions only, to indicate that a source has been correctly identified as supporting the statement
EVAL	Evaluation
Highlighter	Highlight relevant areas of a response
L1	Level 1 response
L2	Level 2 response
L3	Level 3 response
L4	Level 4 response

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Annotation	Meaning
L5	Level 5 response
L6	Level 6 response
Off-page comment	Comments entered at the bottom of the marking window and then displayed when the associated question item is navigated to
On-page comment	Comments entered in speech bubbles on the candidate response
SEEN	To indicate that a point has been noted but no credit has been given OR To indicate that a blank page has been checked for creditable content
	Does not address the question

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Assessment Objectives

AO1
An ability to recall, select, organise and deploy knowledge of the syllabus content.

AO3
An ability to understand, interpret, evaluate and use a wide range of sources as evidence, in their historical context.

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
	OPTION A: NINETEENTH CENTURY TOPIC		
1(a)	**Study Sources A and B.** **How far do these two sources agree? Explain your answer using details of the sources.** **Level 5 (7 marks)** **Answers that compare the big messages of the two sources.** A is largely pro-Bureau and criticises the report, while B is anti-Bureau and approves of the report. **Level 4 (5–6 marks)** **Answers that compare agreement(s) AND disagreement(s).** **Level 3 (3–4 marks)** **Answers that compare agreements OR disagreements.** **Level 2 (2 marks)** **Answers based on information that is in one source but not in the other** **OR** **Answers that compare the provenance of the sources.** **Level 1 (1 mark)** **Answers that attempt to compare the sources but make no valid comparison.** **Level 0 (0 marks)** **No creditable response.**	**7**	**Agreements** include: They agree that the report criticises the Bureau, it says the Bureau is not helping black Americans, and the Bureau should be abolished. Both sources state that some of the Bureau's employees are corrupt. **Disagreements** include: A claims the Bureau has done good work, B rejects this; A criticises the report, B welcomes it; in A Bureau is doing good things e.g. promoting industry, security, good morals etc. but B says the Bureau is turning freedmen into slaves.

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
1(b)	**Study Source C.** **What is the cartoonist's message? Explain your answer using details of the source and your knowledge.** **Level 5 (7–8 marks)** **Explain the cartoonist's point of view.** If not explained, place in Level 4. **Level 4 (6 marks)** **Explains the big message.** If not explained, place in Level 3. **Level 3 (3–5 marks)** **Explains valid sub-messages.** **Level 2 (2 marks)** **Misinterprets the cartoon.** e.g. critical of black Americans. **Level 1 (1 mark)** **Surface descriptions of the cartoon.** **Level 0 (0 marks)** **No creditable response.**	**8**	**Cartoonist's point of view** – Criticising the fact that Reconstruction has failed, white Southerners have regained power/black Americans are suffering and something should be done, people should vote Republican. **The big message** – Reconstruction has failed and • white Southerners have regained control or • black Americans are suffering or • black Americans want an end to terror or the ability to vote without the fear of violence. **Valid sub-messages** include: Reconstruction has failed, black Americans are suffering.

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
1(c)	**Study Sources D and E.** **How far does Source D prove that the account in Source E is wrong? Explain your answer using details of the sources and your knowledge.** **Level 6 (8 marks)** **Compares the big messages (points of view) and evaluates at least one of the sources.** Evaluation can be in terms of purpose or using contextual knowledge/cross reference to explain whether E is wrong. **Level 5 (6–7 marks)** **Compares big messages (points of view) to explain why E is/is not wrong.** **Level 4 (5 marks)** **Uses purpose, contextual knowledge or cross-reference to explain why Source F is/is not wrong BUT no relevant use of Source D.** **Level 3 (4 marks)** **Compares details (without getting to overall big message) to explain why E is/is not wrong.** **Level 2 (2–3 marks)** **Compares/analyses the sources appropriately but fails to state whether Source E is wrong.** **Level 1 (1 mark)** **Assertions based on provenance – no valid use of what the sources say.** **Level 0 0 marks** **No creditable response.**	**8**	**Big messages** – D - Radical Republican Reconstruction was good. It was successful and achieved a lot. E – Radical Reconstruction was bad. It was a disaster for black and white Southerners. **Details** that can be compared include: in D conditions improved in the South, in E they got worse. Must address issue of E being wrong in Levels 3–6. Otherwise, Level 2.

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
1(d)	**Study Source F.** **How far is this source surprising? Explain your answer using details of the source and your knowledge.** **Level 5 (7–8 marks)** **Uses Greeley's purpose in context to express lack of surprise.** **Level 4 (6 marks)** **Uses cross reference or contextual knowledge to explain surprise AND lack of surprise.** **Level 3 (4–5 marks)** **Uses cross reference or contextual knowledge to explain surprise OR lack of surprise.** **Level 2 (2–3 marks)** **Uses cross reference or contextual knowledge to explain surprise lack of surprise of sub messages of Source F** **OR** **Analyses Source F but fails to state whether surprising.** **Level 1 (1 mark)** **Identifies parts of Source F that are/are not surprising but no valid explanation.** **Level 0 (0 marks)** **No creditable response.**	**8**	Must address issue of surprise in Levels 3-6. Otherwise, Level 2. **Greeley's purpose** is to persuade people to accept Reconstruction. **Levels 3–5** must be based on an overall understanding of F – that Reconstruction will be a success for the South/will heal the South/F is optimistic about Reconstruction.

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
1(e)	**Study all the sources.** **How far do these sources provide convincing evidence that Reconstruction was a success? Use the sources to explain your answer.** Source use must be referenced by source letter, provenance or a quote. There must be use of source content and an explanation of how this supports/does not support the statement. **Level 4 (6–9 marks)** **Uses the sources to support AND reject the statement.** **Level 3 (3–5 marks)** **Uses the sources to support OR reject the statement.** Supporting: A, D, F Not supporting: A, B, C, E **Level 2 (2 marks)** **Uses the sources but fails to use them to test the statement.** **Level 1 (1 mark)** **Writes about the topic but no use of sources.** **Level 0 (0 marks)** **No creditable response.**	**9**	Use a tick in the margin to indicate valid source use in support of the statement, and a cross to indicate source use not in support of the statement. Source use may be: a relevant quotation that is adequate by itself or an explanation of how part of the source does the job.

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
	OPTION B: TWENTIETH CENTURY TOPIC		
2(a)	**Study Sources A and B.** **How far do these two sources agree? Explain your answer using details of the sources.** **Level 5 (7 marks)** **Answers that compare the big messages of the two sources.** A - the Treaty was not unduly harsh, and Germany brought its economic problems on itself while in B, the Treaty was too harsh and caused Germany's economic problems. *Note – there must be a clear signposting of this, or it must be the sole focus of the answer.* **Level 4 (5–6 marks)** **Answers that compare agreement(s) AND disagreement(s).** **Level 3 (3–4 marks)** **Answers that compare agreements OR disagreements.** **Level 2 (2 marks)** **Answers based on information that is in one source but not in the other** **OR** **Answers that compare the provenance of the sources** **OR** **Answers that state the sources are about the same thing – must say what this is.** **Level 1 (1 mark)** **Answers that attempt to compare the sources but make no valid comparison.**	**7**	**Agreements** include: Germany's economy fell into ruin, Germany fell behind on reparation payments, Germany came out of the war strong, Treaty was harsh, inflation in Germany was out of control. **Disagreements** include: in A Germany brought its economic problems on itself, in B the Treaty caused them; in A Germany could have paid reparations, in B they could not; in A the Treaty doesn't cause many problems, in B it does; In A the Treaty is not an unbearable burden, in B it is – it's designed to crush Germany; in A inflation is not caused by reparations as the Germans didn't pay them, in B inflation is caused by reparations; A says the Treaty is not too bad, B says it is. **Disagreements over what the British thought** - in A the British thought the Treaty was too harsh/there is sympathy in Britain for Germany, while in B the British are happy with the Treaty because it is harsh/some wanted it harsher. Do not allow too harsh or rather harsh as an agreement.

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
2(a)	**Level 0 (0 marks)** **No creditable response.**		

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
2(b)	**Study Sources C and D.** **How similar are these two cartoons? Explain your answer using details of the sources and your knowledge.** **Level 5 (7–8 marks)** **Compares the points of view of the cartoonists** Must be supported, otherwise award L3/3. **Level 4 (5–6 marks)** **Compares valid sub-messages of the cartoons without getting to the points of view.** Unsupported messages award L3/3. **Level 3 (3–4 marks)** **Explains sub-message/point of view of one of the sources** **OR** **Interprets both sources - but no valid comparison** **OR** **Unsupported messages or points of view – award 3 marks.** **Level 2 (2 marks)** **Compares surface details** **OR** **Compares the provenance of the sources** **OR** **Compares the subject matter of the sources.** **Level 1 (1 mark)** **Misinterprets one or both sources.** **Level 0 (0 marks)** **No creditable response.**	**8**	**Points of view** – e.g. C is criticising the size of reparations and saying that Germany cannot afford it, D is supporting the reparations and saying that Germany deserves them because of the damage it did in the war. C Treaty is unfair, in D it is fair. Alternative point of view – both are critical of Germany, in C for being cocky/defiant/having no intention of paying, in D because Germany has caused damage. **Valid sub – messages** - both sources suggest Germany does not like the reparations, Germany has to pay high reparations, Germany does not want to pay reparations. C suggests Germany cannot pay, D suggests Germany deserves to pay. C suggests the Germans are laid back/cocky, in D they are angry. **NOTE:** – award L3/3 for points of view or sub-messages without any explicit reference to reparations.

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
2(c)	**Study Sources E and F.** **How far does Source E make Source F surprising? Explain your answer using details of the sources and your knowledge.** **Level 6 (8 marks)** **Compares points of view and evaluates at least one of the sources.** Evaluation can be in terms of purpose or using contextual knowledge/cross reference to explain there is no reason for being surprised. **Level 5 (7 marks)** **Compares points of view to explain why F is/is not surprising.** **Level 4 (5–6 marks)** **Compares messages of sources (no point of view) to explain why F is/is not surprising.** **Always award 6 if both surprise and not surprised is explained.** **Level 3 (3–4 marks)** **Uses purpose, contextual knowledge or cross-reference to explain why Source F is/is not surprising BUT no relevant use of Source E.** **Level 2 (2 marks)** **Compares/analyses the sources appropriately but fails to state whether Source F is surprising** **OR** **Identifies something that is/is not surprising but no valid explanation.**	8	**Points of view** – E supports/justifies the Treaty, while F criticises it. **Valid messages** – E says the peace is deserved, F suggests it is not. Both have good intentions. Both agree the Treaty is harsh. In Levels 3–6 messages must be supported. If not move one level down. Must address issue of surprise in Levels 3–6. Otherwise, Level 2.

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
2(c)	**Level 1 (1 mark)** **Assertions based on provenance – no valid use of what the sources say.** **Level 0 (0 marks)** **No creditable response.**		

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
2(d)	**Study Source G.** **Why did Wilson make this speech at that time? Explain your answer using details of the source and your knowledge.** **Level 6 (7–8 marks)** **Explains the intended impact on audience in context.** **Level 5 (5–6 marks)** **Explains the intended impact on audience.** Must be supported by reference to the source otherwise L3. **Level 4 (4 marks)** **Explains the big message as the reason for the speech.** **Level 3 (3 marks)** **Explains sub-messages or context.** **Level 2 (2 marks)** **Explains big message, sub-messages or context but not used as reason for the speech.** **Level 1 (1 mark)** **Paraphrases/repeats parts of source.** **Level 0 (0 marks)** **No creditable response.**	**8**	**Note:** In Levels 3–6 the answers must use the explanation/analysis as a reason for making the speech. Otherwise, Level 2. **Level 6** answers must contain: a valid message, valid context and intended impact. **Purpose** (intended impact) – to persuade Americans to support the Treaty. There must be an explicit reference to Americans as the audience. **Context** – the Senate was due to vote on the Treaty (November), Wilson's speaking tour around the USA to win support for the Treaty, general anti-Versailles feeling in America, feeling in America that Germany had been treated too harshly. **Big message** – the Treaty is a just one (must be supported). **Sub-messages** include: Germany deserved the punishment, Germany can cope with the Treaty, the Treaty is not too harsh, the Treaty supports self-determination.

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
2(e)	**Study all the sources.** **How far do these sources provide convincing evidence that there was support for the Treaty? Use the sources to explain your answer.** Source use must be referenced by source letter, provenance or a quote. There must be use of source content and an explanation of how this supports/does not support the statement. **Level 4 (6–9 marks)** **Uses the sources to support AND reject the statement.** **Level 3 (3–5 marks)** **Uses the sources to support OR reject the statement.** Supporting: A, B, D, E, G Not supporting: A, B, C, F, G **Level 2 (2 marks)** **Uses the sources but fails to use them to test the statement.** **Level 1 (1 mark)** **Writes about the topic but no use of sources.** **Level 0 (0 marks)** **No creditable response.**	**9**	Use a tick in the margin to indicate valid source use in support of the statement, and a cross to indicate source use not in support of the statement. Source use may be: a relevant quotation that is adequate by itself or an explanation of how part of the source does the job.

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