

A-Level History Marking Bands for Essay Questions

- Examiners will assess which marking bands best reflects the quality of the answer.
- They should not expect answers to show all the qualities included within the band descriptors.
- The choice of mark within the band will depend on the quality of the analysis and the amount of supporting information.
- Essays in Bands 1-3 will clearly be questioned-focused, whereas answers in the lower bands will show a primary concern with the topic rather than with the specific question asked.
- However, a question focus is not sufficient in itself to place an essay in Bands 1-3; this must also be accompanied by sufficient accurate, relevant supporting material.

Band	Marks	Quality of the answer
1	21-25	The approach will be consistently analytical or explanatory rather than descriptive or narrative. Essays will be fully relevant . The argument will be structured coherently and supported by appropriate factual material . The writing will be accurate . At the lower end of the band, there may be some weaker sections to the answer, but the overall quality will show that the candidate is in control of the argument . The best answers must achieve 25 marks.
2	18-20	Essays will be focused clearly on the demands of the question but there will be some unevenness . The approach will be mostly analytical or explanatory rather than descriptive or narrative. The answer will be mostly relevant . Most of the argument will be structured coherently and supported by largely accurate factual material. The impression will be that a good solid answer has been provided. The writing will be mostly accurate .
3	16-17	Essays will reflect a clear understanding of the question, and constitute a fair attempt to provide an argument and factual knowledge to answer it. The approach will contain analysis or explanation, but there may be some heavily narrative or descriptive passages . The answer will be largely relevant . Essays will achieve a genuine argument but may lack balance or depth of factual knowledge. Most of the answer will be structured satisfactorily but some parts may lack full coherence . The writing will be generally accurate .
4	14-15	Essays will indicate attempts to argue relevantly, though often only implicitly . The approach will depend more on some heavily descriptive or narrative passages than on analysis or explanation, which may be limited to introductions and conclusions. Factual material, sometimes very full, will be used to impart information or describe events rather than to address directly the requirements of the question. The structure of the argument could be organized more effectively . The writing will usually be accurate .
5	11-13	Essays will offer some appropriate elements but there will be little attempt generally to link factual material to the demands of the question. The approach will lack analysis and the quality of the description or narrative , although sufficiently accurate and relevant to the topic if not the particular question, will not be linked effectively to the argument . The structure will show weaknesses and the treatment of topics within the answer will be unbalanced . The writing may show some accuracy but there will also be frequent errors .
6	8-10	Essays will not be properly focused on the requirements of the question . There may be many unsupported assertions and commentaries which lack sufficient factual support . The argument may be of limited relevance to the topic and there may be confusion about the implications of the question. The writing will show significant weaknesses .
7	0-7	Essays will be characterized by significant irrelevance or arguments which do not begin to make significant points . The answers may be largely fragmentary and incoherent . The writing will show very significant weakness . Marks at the bottom of this band will be given very rarely because even the most wayward and fragmentary answer usually makes at least a few valid points.