

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