



A-level HISTORY 7042/2P

Component 2P The Transformation of China, 1936–1997

Mark scheme

June 2024

Version: 1.0 Final



2 4 6 A 7 0 4 2 / 2 P / M S

Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

No student should be disadvantaged on the basis of their gender identity and/or how they refer to the gender identity of others in their exam responses.

A consistent use of 'they/them' as a singular and pronouns beyond 'she/her' or 'he/him' will be credited in exam responses in line with existing mark scheme criteria.

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Level of response marking instructions

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the average performance for the level. There are marks in each level.

Before you apply the mark scheme to a student's answer read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. You can then apply the mark scheme.

Step 1 Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level. The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity, you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level, you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, ie if the response is predominantly Level 3 with a small amount of Level 4 material it would be placed in Level 3 but be awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the Level 4 content.

Step 2 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help. There will be an answer in the standardising materials which will correspond with each level of the mark scheme. This answer will have been awarded a mark by the Lead Examiner. You can compare the student's answer with the example to determine if it is the same standard, better or worse than the example. You can then use this to allocate a mark for the answer based on the Lead Examiner's mark on the example.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other valid points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the Indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.

Section A

- 0 1** With reference to these sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying the Great Leap Forward.

[30 marks]

Target: AO2

Analyse and evaluate appropriate source material, primary and/or contemporary to the period, within the historical context.

Generic Mark Scheme

- L5:** Shows a very good understanding of all three sources in relation to both content and provenance and combines this with a strong awareness of the historical context to present a balanced argument on their value for the particular purpose given in the question. The answer will convey a substantiated judgement. The response demonstrates a very good understanding of context. **25–30**
- L4:** Shows a good understanding of all three sources in relation to both content and provenance and combines this with an awareness of the historical context to provide a balanced argument on their value for the particular purpose given in the question. Judgements may, however, be partial or limited in substantiation. The response demonstrates a good understanding of context. **19–24**
- L3:** Shows some understanding of all three sources in relation to both content and provenance together with some awareness of the historical context. There may, however, be some imbalance in the degree of breadth and depth of comment offered on all three sources and the analysis may not be fully convincing. The answer will make some attempt to consider the value of the sources for the particular purpose given in the question. The response demonstrates an understanding of context. **13–18**
- L2:** The answer will be partial. It may, for example, provide some comment on the value of the sources for the particular purpose given in the question but only address one or two of the sources, or focus exclusively on content (or provenance), or it may consider all three sources but fail to address the value of the sources for the particular purpose given in the question. The response demonstrates some understanding of context. **7–12**
- L1:** The answer will offer some comment on the value of at least one source in relation to the purpose given in the question but the response will be limited and may be partially inaccurate. Comments are likely to be unsupported, vague or generalist. The response demonstrates limited understanding of context. **1–6**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.

Students must deploy knowledge of the historical context to show an understanding of the relationship between the sources and the issues raised in the question, when assessing the significance of provenance, the arguments deployed in the sources and the tone and emphasis of the sources. Descriptive answers which fail to do this should be awarded no more than Level 2 at best. Answers should address both the value and the limitations of the sources for the particular question and purpose given.

Source A: in assessing the value of this source, students may refer to the following:

Provenance, tone and emphasis

- as both an agricultural expert and a member of a people's commune at the time of the Great Leap Forward, the author would have clear insights into the agricultural failings of the plan. As someone working on a commune, they would be witness to the actions of the cadres, but not to decisions being taken at government level
- as the information was given during an interview with a Western historian in Beijing in 2001, the expert is remembering events from over 40 years ago, although students may comment that such a traumatic event may have remained clear in their memory. Despite the fact that the expert is named and is based in Beijing, the account is remarkably frank and critical, possibly because the interview was with a Western historian
- 1958 was the year before famine began so the source shows that it was clear much earlier to some witnesses that there were significant problems with the Great Leap Forward. This means the problems could have been rectified if the CCP had been willing to listen
- the tone is highly critical of the behaviour of the cadre, but also the plan as a whole.

Content and argument

- the source highlights the excessive focus on producing iron in the backyard furnaces and how this played a role in causing a famine – it shows how equipment needed to ensure a good harvest was diverted to meet steel quotas instead
- the source places responsibility for this mistake on the misjudgement of the cadre, emphasising their focus on meeting steel targets instead of listening to the advice from the expert. There is some justification for this as cadres were responsible for setting excessive targets, lying about meeting them and diverting peasants from growing and harvesting crops
- the source highlights the brutality of some of the cadres during the Great Leap Forward – as well as stripping the commune of its most valuable assets for ensuring a good harvest in order to meet steel quotas as seen here, there were also cases where cadres took the last grain from peasants to try and meet their grain quotas
- there is, however, in the line 'Would you like to take over my position as cadre and see what it is like?', a hint that the author is being unfair towards the cadres. It shows the pressure they were under to set and meet high targets, due to the expectations set by Mao and the fear of being branded a rightist
- not all cadres behaved in this manner – there are many instances of cadres risking their lives and careers in trying to point out the flaws in the plan and ensuring they protected their peasants as much as possible.

Source B: in assessing the value of this source, students may refer to the following:

Provenance, tone and emphasis

- Mao was the Chairman of the PRC and instigator of the Great Leap Forward. Mao set the mood in China so his words would have an enormous impact on the behaviour of people in China, especially after the 1957 Anti-Rightist Campaign
- he could be considered an unreliable witness as he is insisting that nothing major is going wrong with the Great Leap Forward. He is downplaying any problems because he was responsible for launching the plan. He is also deflecting any blame for failure onto others, namely rightists and saboteurs
- in 1959, rumours of famine had already started reaching the upper echelons of the party but we still see Mao resisting pressure to change anything about the Great Leap Forward
- the audience is the cadres responsible for implementing the Great Leap Forward and Mao's tone towards them is angry and threatening – he is warning them that any criticism of the Great Leap Forward would be considered a rightist plot.

Content and argument

- Mao is suggesting that there are no flaws within the Great Leap Forward and that the people's communes are the correct way forward. Even after reports of famine had already reached him, he continues to throw his full support behind the people's communes. His statements could be challenged by students as many problems had been found with the system of people's communes
- Mao states that any criticisms or suggestions of failure are part of a rightist plot to sabotage the CCP. This delusional approach by Mao helps explain why the Great Leap Forward continued long after it had become clear it was not working
- the source shows the huge pressure placed on cadres and why they set such inflated targets and then lied about reaching them in order to avoid being targeted as rightists. As the grain quotas taken from the people's communes were based on these inflated figures, a famine spread through the countryside. Ultimately, this suggests that the political environment created by Mao is responsible for the problems with the Great Leap Forward
- this foreshadowed the events of the Lushan Conference in July 1959, where Mao accused Peng Dehuai of heading a rightist conspiracy when he wrote to Mao suggesting there were problems within the Great Leap Forward. Mao's refusal to listen to any criticism is why no steps were taken to rectify problems and curtail the famine.

Source C: in assessing the value of this source, students may refer to the following:

Provenance, tone and emphasis

- the author, a headmaster appointed by the CCP, is giving the official government explanation of why there were food shortages during the Great Leap Forward
- 1960 was the high point of the famine and also the year of the Sino-Soviet split
- the speech is recounted by a member of the audience over thirty years later. In addition, she was a child at the time she heard the speech
- the tone is accusatory towards the Soviet Union, absolving the CCP of any blame.

Content and argument

- the source blames the Soviet Union for any problems with the Great Leap Forward. Students can corroborate elements of this with information about the withdrawal of Soviet experts and the grain exported to the USSR throughout the famine years
- students may challenge the validity of blaming the USSR, pointing out that Soviet experts were widely ignored even before they had been withdrawn, as Mao favoured mass mobilisation over expert knowledge, and that the exports sent to the USSR do not explain the extent of famine
- the source shows what ordinary people were being told about what had caused failure and famine so we see the propaganda that was being spread by the PRC at the time
- this explains why many in China did not blame Mao for what was happening in their village – the Sino-Soviet split meant that there was a convenient scapegoat to take the blame for any failures.

Section B

- 0 2** How successful was Jiang Jieshi in carrying out the GMD's principles of Nationalism, Democracy and the People's Livelihood before the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war?

[25 marks]*Target: AO1*

Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.

Generic Mark Scheme

- L5:** Answers will display a very good understanding of the full demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively delivered. The supporting information will be well-selected, specific and precise. It will show a very good understanding of key features, issues and concepts. The answer will be fully analytical with a balanced argument and well-substantiated judgement. **21–25**
- L4:** Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. It will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment relating to the question. The answer will be well-balanced with some judgement, which may, however, be only partially substantiated. **16–20**
- L3:** Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information, which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features, but may, however, be unspecific or lack precision of detail. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be a good deal of comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance, but a number of statements may be inadequately supported and generalist. **11–15**
- L2:** The answer is descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way, although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. **6–10**
- L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1–5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.

Arguments supporting the view that Jiang Jieshi was successful in carrying out the GMD's principles of Nationalism, Democracy and the People's Livelihood before the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war might include:

- Nationalism: by the outbreak of war, Jiang Jieshi had removed most forms of Western imperialism from China, namely the customs service and the majority of the treaty ports
- Nationalism: Jiang Jieshi had made considerable progress in reuniting China as he had formed a national government in Nanjing which directly controlled 11 of China's 18 provinces – the most united China had been in decades
- Democracy: Jiang Jieshi seemed to be implementing the three-step process towards eventual democracy, namely military rule to unite the country; a period of political tutelage; and then constitutional democracy. Jiang Jieshi claimed China had reached the political tutelage stage in 1936, when he held elections for an advisory National Assembly
- People's Livelihood: Jiang was implementing this by improving living standards for the people of China by modernising the economic infrastructure, including the provision of electricity, roads, railways, steamers and a telegraph and postal service. Modern hospitals and schools were established in the cities of the eastern seaboard.

Arguments challenging the view that Jiang Jieshi was successful in carrying out the GMD's principles of Nationalism, Democracy and the People's Livelihood before the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war might include:

- Nationalism: as seen in the Xian Incident of 1937, many in China thought Jiang Jieshi was failing as he was not preventing the Japanese advance into China. There were also some remaining treaty-ports in the hands of Western powers
- Nationalism: far from being united, China remained highly fragmented with Manchuria in the hands of the Japanese, areas of Shaanxi in the hands of the Communists and many parts of China still in the hands of rebellious warlords
- Democracy: far from moving China towards democracy, Jiang Jieshi was becoming increasingly authoritarian, or even fascist, as seen by his reliance on the Blue Shirts, Bureau of Military Statistics and the suppression of opposition
- People's Livelihood: the economic improvements only improved the lives of the elites living on the eastern seaboard. Most Chinese peasants were still living in grinding poverty – there were very few schools or hospitals and peasants were forced to pay exorbitant rates of taxation and rent.

Students might argue that Jiang Jieshi was not very successful in carrying out these principles before the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war because the political context – namely the simultaneous threats from the communists, the Japanese and the warlords – made this too difficult, or because he had abandoned these principles in all but name as he moved towards a more authoritarian approach. Alternatively, students could argue that, given the difficult circumstances he faced, he was remarkably successful and it was only the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war which stopped the momentum he had been building up. Material from before 1936 is not required for the highest levels, but any pre-1936 references will receive credit if still applicable in 1936.

0 3 'Conflict over Xinjiang was the main cause of the deterioration in Sino-Soviet relations in the years 1962 to 1966.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

Target: AO1

Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.

Generic Mark Scheme

- L5:** Answers will display a very good understanding of the full demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively delivered. The supporting information will be well-selected, specific and precise. It will show a very good understanding of key features, issues and concepts. The answer will be fully analytical with a balanced argument and well-substantiated judgement. **21–25**
- L4:** Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. It will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment relating to the question. The answer will be well-balanced with some judgement, which may, however, be only partially substantiated. **16–20**
- L3:** Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information, which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features, but may, however, be unspecific or lack precision of detail. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be a good deal of comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance, but a number of statements may be inadequately supported and generalist. **11–15**
- L2:** The answer is descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way, although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. **6–10**
- L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1–5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.

Arguments supporting the view that conflict over Xinjiang was the main cause of the deterioration in Sino-Soviet relations in the years 1962 to 1966 might include:

- Xinjiang was an area of long-standing tension between the USSR and China and the CCP remained suspicious that the USSR had imperialist ambitions in the area. The USSR had insisted on gaining mineral rights there in the 1950 Treaty of Friendship and Soviet engineers had exploited the area, so the CCP feared this was the start of further imperialism. It was an issue the CCP was willing to go to war over as it prided itself on ridding China of foreign imperialism and protecting Chinese territory
- retaining control over Xinjiang was important for China for economic reasons also as Xinjiang held considerable raw materials and many Han Chinese had migrated to the area to work there. Given that China was in an important phase of economic recovery, the USSR's interference in the region worsened relations between the two countries
- this existing fear of the USSR's imperialist ambitions in Xinjiang became particularly intense in 1962 due to the famine in the region. Many Uighurs crossed over to the Soviet Union to escape it, and the CCP accused the Soviets of deliberately encouraging disaffection amongst the Uighur population in order to weaken Chinese control in the area. They feared the USSR was using this as a way of getting control of Chinese territory
- although China and the USSR entered talks to try and resolve the border dispute in the area, both were building up their military presence along the border and the talks remained unresolved and hostile. The huge build-up of military on each side of the border worsened relations considerably and set the stage for future fighting.

Arguments challenging the view that conflict over Xinjiang was the main cause of the deterioration in Sino-Soviet relations in the years 1962 to 1966 might include:

- conflict over ideology had been a fundamental cause of the Sino-Soviet split and this continued to be a very important source of disagreement throughout this period, especially with Mao's opposition to Khrushchev's policy of peaceful coexistence. Mao criticised his capitulation in the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis and his signing of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty in 1963
- it could be argued that tension over India was more important as a war actually broke out over this issue, unlike in Xinjiang. When China and India went to war over a border dispute in 1962, the USSR supplied India with military aircraft and diplomatic support
- tension also rose due to China becoming a nuclear power in 1964. The USSR had been helping them develop these weapons but had withdrawn this aid in 1960 so this was China showing the USSR that they did not need them. It also made the USSR concerned that China acquiring these weapons had upset the strategic balance in the world, especially as Mao's rhetoric suggested he was more than ready to use them, possibly against the USSR
- the Vietnam War also caused problems. The USSR was North Vietnam's primary ally and Mao was worried about having another Soviet ally on their border and that China would be pulled into another war which would aid the USSR, as had happened with Korea. Mao was beginning to feel that China was becoming encircled by Soviet allies, which he viewed as threatening.

Students might argue that the conflict over Xinjiang was the primary cause of deterioration because this was the only area where the CCP feared that the Soviet Union had plans to take over Chinese land, and the CCP was utterly committed to opposing any forms of foreign imperialism in China. This is the only area of tension where it seemed possible that there could be a direct war between the two countries. Alternatively, students could argue that the conflict between the USSR and China was primarily ideological in nature and that this continued to be the case – the various territorial disputes of this period

were a symptom of this deeper problem. Students may also argue that the deterioration was a cumulation of all the disputes of the period as Mao was starting to feel encircled by Soviet allies.

0 4 'The Shanghai Radicals were the most powerful group in China in the years 1969 to 1976.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

Target: AO1

Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.

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- L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1–5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.

Arguments supporting the view that the Shanghai Radicals were the most powerful group in China in the years 1969 to 1976 might include:

- the Shanghai Radicals had considerable political power as they dominated the Politburo throughout this period
- the Shanghai Radicals were able to influence the political direction of the country and the views of the public due to their control of state propaganda, especially the 'People's Daily'
- by September 1971, the Shanghai Radicals had become the obvious successors to Mao, as shown by one of their members, Wang Hongwen, being named as such by Mao. As Mao wanted to 'uphold the verdict of the Cultural Revolution' the only other real contender was Lin Biao, and he had been accused of plotting a coup against Mao and had been killed in an air crash
- the Shanghai Radicals were able to ensure that Zhou Enlai's moderates never became too powerful in this period – they launched the Anti-Confucius campaigns against them in 1973 and, more successfully, convinced Mao in 1976 that the protests after Zhou Enlai's death were a counterrevolutionary plot by Deng Xiaoping. Hence, he was purged in 1976 and that faction fell out of favour
- at Mao's death in 1976, the Shanghai Radicals seemed poised to take over the government of China. Although a relative unknown, Hua Guofeng, had by then been named as Mao's chosen successor, the Shanghai Radicals were confident they could outmanoeuvre him easily.

Arguments challenging the view that the Shanghai Radicals were the most powerful group in China in the years 1969 to 1976 might include:

- the powerful political position they had held throughout the Cultural Revolution seemed to be on the wane after 1969. The Cultural Revolution was declared over, the Cultural Revolution Group wound down and Mao seemed to be tiring of their ultra-leftist tendencies
- the vindictiveness of their leader, Jiang Qing, also turned many against the group, and by 1974, Mao was openly distancing himself from her – the 1973 Anti-Confucius Campaign persuaded him that she was too broiled in factional fighting to be trusted. This is why ultimately Mao named a relative unknown who was not linked to the Shanghai radicals, Hua Guofeng, as his successor shortly before dying
- Zhou Enlai and the moderates in the state bureaucracy could be seen as the most powerful group. Mao relied on them to keep the government of China functioning throughout this period. He often favoured them and their policies over the ultra-leftist policies of the Shanghai Radicals, such as in 1972/73 when they orchestrated the improved relations with the USA and again in 1975 when Mao even allowed the rehabilitation of Deng Xiaoping
- the PLA could be seen as the most powerful group – they dominated the Revolutionary Committees that now ruled most of China and had been given huge amounts of power to end the violence of the Red Guards. Until 1971, their leader, Lin Biao, was Mao's favourite and chosen successor. Crucially, the Shanghai Radicals never succeeded in gaining much influence over the military and this could be seen as a key reason why they were purged by the end of 1976.

Students might argue that in these years, the power struggle to be Mao's successor meant that no group, including the Shanghai Radicals, was able to retain power for long so no group was consistently the most powerful. Alternatively, students might argue that the Shanghai Radicals seemed to be winning the power struggle and were consistently able to outmanoeuvre their rivals and that by 1976 both the PLA and the moderates were out of favour, meaning that the Shanghai Radicals were indeed the most powerful group. Others may argue their power was an illusion as they were quickly purged after the death of Mao.