



Oxford Cambridge and RSA

A Level History A

Unit Y301

The Early Anglo-Saxons c.400–800

Sample Question Paper

Version 0.14

Date – Morning/Afternoon

Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes



OCR supplied materials:

- 12 page Answer Booklet

Other materials required:

- None



* o o o o o o *

First name											
Last name											
Centre number							Candidate number				

INSTRUCTIONS

- Use black ink.
- Complete the boxes above with your name, centre number and candidate number.
- Answer Question 1 in Section A and any 2 questions in Section B.
- Write your answer to each question on the Answer Booklet.
- Do **not** write in the bar codes.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is **80**.
- The marks for each question are shown in brackets [].
- Quality of extended responses will be assessed in questions marked with an asterisk (*).
- This document consists of **8** pages.

Section A

Read the two passages and then answer Question 1.

- 1 Evaluate the interpretation in both of the two passages and explain which you think is more convincing in explaining the extent to which the Mercian supremacy from the eighth to early ninth centuries has been exaggerated.

[30]

Passage A

The re-establishment of the Mercian supremacy by Offa is the central fact in English history in the second half of the eighth century. But the stages by which it was brought about cannot now be reconstructed. No Mercian chronicle has survived from this period. Charters do exist, though, and give some impression of Offa's place among English kings. They suggest that Kent was the first long-established kingdom to fall under his influence. In Kent and Sussex, Offa was able to substitute his own authority for that of earlier local rulers. In Wessex, which had been a united kingdom for seventy years before his accession, the local kingship was initially preserved by the strength of traditions that had gathered around it. However, by 786 Offa had also managed to bring the West Saxon kingdom under his influence.

The age of Mercian supremacy has been studied less than any other period of Anglo-Saxon history, and unless new materials come to light, its details will always be uncertain. But its general significance is plain. The great Mercian Kings of this age created a political system which included every kingdom in southern England. This system permitted every variety of relationship which could then exist between men of independent kingdoms and an overlord. At its weakest, it meant little more than occasional hospitality shown by the king of the Mercians to local rulers as well born as himself. But overkingship soon passed into political authority when the overlord was an autocrat like Athelbald or Offa and, as time went on, more than one insignificant king exchanged his ancestral rank, and the claim to independence which it implied, for the security of a provincial ealdorman under Mercian patronage. With all its weaknesses the system marks the first advance ever made on a great scale towards the political unity of England. It showed that the particularism of the smaller kingdoms was not an insuperable obstacle to the creation of a greater state.

Adapted from: F.M. Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, published in 1989

Adapted from: Stenton, F.M. (1989), *Anglo-Saxon England (Oxford History of England)*. Reproduced with permission from Oxford University Press through PLS Clear.

Passage B

For scholars in the first half of the twentieth century the Mercian dominance of this period brought the Anglo-Saxons to within touching distance of political unity. The extensive overkingdoms of Mercian rulers such as Athelbad and Offa were like those of their seventh century Northumbrian counterparts, staging posts on the path to a united England that would be achieved under the West Saxon kings in the tenth century.

Such visions of Mercian supremacy have by now, rightly, receded. The Mercian overkingdoms of the eighth century need to be understood, as much as possible, on their own terms, not as trial runs or failed attempts at English unity. The distinctive nature of successive Mercian overkingdoms and, indeed, of the Mercian form of government as a whole, needs to be appreciated. Mercia remains central to any account of the eighth and ninth centuries but labels such as 'Mercian supremacy' or 'Mercian hegemony (dominance)' may obscure considerable complexities. Mercia's influence over its neighbours was both fluctuating and frequently contested. The danger lies in viewing all events through the lens of an assumed, continuous Mercian pre-eminence.

However, the Mercian kings did gain power and wealth due mainly to their ability to harness the changing economy of Anglo-Saxon England from the late seventh to mid-ninth centuries. International trade expanded considerably and emporia (market places), such as those at York, Ipswich, Southampton and particularly London, increased both in size and organisational complexity in this period. The rural landscape was likewise exploited. Settlements and their associated field-systems were restructured and reorganised. Some settlements shifted from subsistence agriculture to-and perhaps market-orientated-production.

But the rising wealth of Anglo-Saxon England was not only exploited by the royal dynasties. The most obvious beneficiary and perhaps the main driving force of this growing economy was the Church. Rich and powerful monasteries now commanded extensive land resources-in some cases on the scale of small kingdoms-and were the centres of economic and cultural change.'

Adapted from: N.J. Higham & M.J. Ryan, *The Anglo-Saxon World*, published in 2013

Section B

Answer **TWO** of the following three questions.

- 2*** To what extent was Augustine's mission to Britain in 597 the most important influence on the process of Christianisation in the period from c.410 to c.800?
[25]
- 3*** To what extent was there a major change in economic activity in the period of the Early Anglo-Saxons from c.410 to c.800?
[25]
- 4*** 'Latin learning was the most important cultural development in Ireland and Britain from c.410 to c.800.' How far do you agree?
[25]

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...day June 20XX – Morning/Afternoon

A Level History A

Unit Y301 The Early Anglo-Saxons c.400–800

MARK SCHEME

Duration: 2 hour 30 minutes

MAXIMUM MARK 80

MARKING INSTRUCTIONS**PREPARATION FOR MARKING****SCORIS**

1. Make sure that you have accessed and completed the relevant training packages for on-screen marking: *scoris assessor Online Training*; *OCR Essential Guide to Marking*.
2. Make sure that you have read and understood the mark scheme and the question paper for this unit. These are posted on the RM Cambridge Assessment Support Portal <http://www.rm.com/support/ca>
3. Log-in to scoris and mark the **required number** of practice responses (“scripts”) and the **required number** of standardisation responses.

YOU MUST MARK 10 PRACTICE AND 10 STANDARDISATION RESPONSES BEFORE YOU CAN BE APPROVED TO MARK LIVE SCRIPTS.

TRADITIONAL

Before the Standardisation meeting you must mark at least 10 scripts from several centres. For this preliminary marking you should use **pencil** and follow the **mark scheme**. Bring these **marked scripts** to the meeting.

MARKING

1. Mark strictly to the mark scheme.
2. Marks awarded must relate directly to the marking criteria.
3. The schedule of dates is very important. It is essential that you meet the scoris 50% and 100% (traditional 50% Batch 1 and 100% Batch 2) deadlines. If you experience problems, you must contact your Team Leader (Supervisor) without delay.
4. If you are in any doubt about applying the mark scheme, consult your Team Leader by telephone, email or via the scoris messaging system.

5. Work crossed out:
 - a. where a candidate crosses out an answer and provides an alternative response, the crossed out response is not marked and gains no marks
 - b. if a candidate crosses out an answer to a whole question and makes no second attempt, and if the inclusion of the answer does not cause a rubric infringement, the assessor should attempt to mark the crossed out answer and award marks appropriately.
6. Always check the pages (and additional objects if present) at the end of the response in case any answers have been continued there. If the candidate has continued an answer there then add a tick to confirm that the work has been seen.
7. There is a NR (No Response) option. Award NR (No Response)
 - if there is nothing written at all in the answer space
 - OR if there is a comment which does not in any way relate to the question (e.g. 'can't do', 'don't know')
 - OR if there is a mark (e.g. a dash, a question mark) which isn't an attempt at the question.Note: Award 0 marks – for an attempt that earns no credit (including copying out the question).
8. The scoris **comments box** is used by your Team Leader to explain the marking of the practice responses. Please refer to these comments when checking your practice responses. **Do not use the comments box for any other reason.**
If you have any questions or comments for your Team Leader, use the phone, the scoris messaging system, or e-mail.
9. Assistant Examiners will send a brief report on the performance of candidates to their Team Leader (Supervisor) via email by the end of the marking period. The report should contain notes on particular strengths displayed as well as common errors or weaknesses. Constructive criticism of the question paper/mark scheme is also appreciated.
10. For answers marked by levels of response:
 - a. **To determine the level** – start at the highest level and work down until you reach the level that matches the answer
 - b. **To determine the mark within the level**, consider the following:

Descriptor	Award mark
On the borderline of this level and the one below	At bottom of level
Just enough achievement on balance for this level	Above bottom and either below middle or at middle of level (depending on number of marks available)
Meets the criteria but with some slight inconsistency	Above middle and either below top of level or at middle of level (depending on number of marks available)
Consistently meets the criteria for this level	At top of level

11. Annotations

Annotation	Meaning

12. Subject-specific Marking Instructions

INTRODUCTION

Your first task as an Examiner is to become thoroughly familiar with the material on which the examination depends. This material includes:

- the specification, especially the assessment objectives
- the question paper and its rubrics
- the mark scheme.

You should ensure that you have copies of these materials.

You should ensure also that you are familiar with the administrative procedures related to the marking process. These are set out in the OCR booklet **Instructions for Examiners**. If you are examining for the first time, please read carefully **Appendix 5 Introduction to Script Marking: Notes for New Examiners**.

Please ask for help or guidance whenever you need it. Your first point of contact is your Team Leader.

USING THE MARK SCHEME

Please study this Mark Scheme carefully. The Mark Scheme is an integral part of the process that begins with the setting of the question paper and ends with the awarding of grades. Question papers and Mark Schemes are developed in association with each other so that issues of differentiation and positive achievement can be addressed from the very start.

This Mark Scheme is a working document; it is not exhaustive; it does not provide 'correct' answers. The Mark Scheme can only provide 'best guesses' about how the question will work out, and it is subject to revision after we have looked at a wide range of scripts.

The Examiners' Standardisation Meeting will ensure that the Mark Scheme covers the range of candidates' responses to the questions, and that all Examiners understand and apply the Mark Scheme in the same way. The Mark Scheme will be discussed and amended at the meeting, and administrative procedures will be confirmed. Co-ordination scripts will be issued at the meeting to exemplify aspects of candidates' responses and achievements; the co-ordination scripts then become part of this Mark Scheme.

Before the Standardisation Meeting, you should read and mark in pencil a number of scripts, in order to gain an impression of the range of responses and achievement that may be expected.

Please read carefully all the scripts in your allocation and make every effort to look positively for achievement throughout the ability range. Always be prepared to use the full range of marks.

INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR EXAMINERS

- 1 The co-ordination scripts provide you with *examples* of the standard of each band. The marks awarded for these scripts will have been agreed by the Team Leaders and will be discussed fully at the Examiners' Co-ordination Meeting.
- 2 The specific task-related indicative content for each question will help you to understand how the band descriptors may be applied. However, this indicative content does not constitute the mark scheme: it is material that candidates might use, grouped according to each assessment objective tested by the question. It is hoped that candidates will respond to questions in a variety of ways. Rigid demands for 'what must be a good answer' would lead to a distorted assessment.
- 3 Candidates' answers must be relevant to the question. Beware of prepared answers that do not show the candidate's thought and which have not been adapted to the thrust of the question. Beware also of answers where candidates attempt to reproduce interpretations and concepts that they have been taught but have only partially understood.

	<i>A03: Analyse and evaluate, in relation to the historical context, different ways in which aspects of the past have been interpreted.</i>
	Generic mark scheme for Section A, Question 1: Interpretation [30]
Level 6 26–30 marks	The answer has a very good focus on the question throughout. It has thorough and sustained evaluation of the interpretations, using detailed and accurate knowledge of the historical context and the wider historical debate around the issue, in order to produce a convincing and supported analysis of them in relation to the question.
Level 5 21–25 marks	The answer has a good focus on the question throughout. It has good evaluation of the interpretations, using relevant knowledge of the historical context and the wider historical debate around the issue, in order to produce a supported analysis of them in relation to the question.
Level 4 16–20 marks	The answer is mostly focused on the question. It has evaluation of the interpretations based on generally relevant knowledge of the historical context and the wider historical debate around the issue, in order to produce an analysis of them in relation to the question.
Level 3 11–15 marks	The answer is partially focused on the question. It has partial evaluation of the interpretations based on some knowledge of the historical context and the wider historical debate around the issue. There may be some use of information from one of the two interpretations to support the evaluation of the other, but the evaluation will not rely on this. There is a limited analysis of the interpretations in relation to the question.
Level 2 6–10 marks	The answer has a limited focus on the question. Parts of the answer are just description of the interpretations, with evaluation in relation to historical context and the wider historical debate around the issue being weak, and evaluation relying heavily on information drawn from the other interpretation. There is a very limited analysis of the interpretations in relation to the question.
Level 1 1–5 marks	The answer has some relevance to the topic, but not the specific question. The answer consists mostly of description of the interpretations with very limited evaluation based on very generalised knowledge of historical context and minimal or no reference to the wider historical debate. Analysis of the interpretations in relation to the question is either in the form of assertion or lacking.
0 marks	No evidence of understanding and no demonstration of any relevant knowledge.

	<i>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.</i>
	Generic mark scheme for Section B, Questions 2, 3 and 4: Essay [25]
Level 6 21–25 marks	The answer has a very good focus on the question. Detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding is used to analyse and evaluate key features of the period studied in order to reach a fully developed synthesis supporting a convincing and substantiated judgement. There is a well-developed and sustained line of reasoning which is coherent and logically structured. The information presented is entirely relevant and substantiated.
Level 5 17–20 marks	The answer has a good focus on the question. Generally accurate and detailed knowledge and understanding is used to analyse and evaluate key features of the period studied in order to reach a developed synthesis supporting a substantiated judgement. There is a well-developed line of reasoning which is clear and logically structured. The information presented is relevant and in the most part substantiated.
Level 4 13–16 marks	The answer is mostly focused on the question. Relevant knowledge and understanding is used to analyse and evaluate key features of the period studied in order to reach a synthesis supporting a reasonable judgement. There is a line of reasoning presented with some structure. The information presented is in the most-part relevant and supported by some evidence.
Level 3 9–12 marks	The answer has a partial focus on the question. Some relevant knowledge and understanding is used to analyse and explain key features of the period studied in order to attempt an undeveloped synthesis, which is linked to a judgement, though the supporting explanation may lack detail and clarity. The information has some relevance and is presented with limited structure. The information is supported by limited evidence.
Level 2 5–8 marks	The answer has only a limited focus on the question. Limited relevant knowledge and understanding is used to give a limited explanation and analysis of key features of the period studied. There is a judgement but this may not be clearly linked with the supporting explanation. The information has some relevance, but is communicated in an unstructured way. The information is supported by limited evidence and the relationship to the evidence may not be clear.
Level 1 1–4 marks	The answer has a limited focus on the topic, but not the specific question. The answer is largely descriptive, with only very generalised knowledge of the period studied being used to attempt basic explanation and very limited analysis. Judgements are unsupported and are not linked to analysis. Information presented is basic and may be ambiguous or unstructured. The information is supported by limited evidence.
0 marks	The answer contains no relevant information.

Section A

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
1	<p>Evaluate the interpretation in both of the two passages and explain which you think is more convincing in explaining the extent to which the Mercian supremacy from the eighth to early ninth centuries has been exaggerated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In locating the Interpretations within the wider historical debate, answers might argue that Interpretation A argues that the extent of the Mercian supremacy has not been exaggerated, although it acknowledges that it is difficult to measure the extent of supremacy due to a lack of source material. • In evaluating Interpretation A, answers might argue that the 8th century kings were as powerful as those that preceded them; if anything, due to legal and cultural changes, they operated in a more politically stable climate. • Answers might argue that Interpretation A is correct because both Aethelbald and Offa were considered, at the time, to be kings not just of a united Mercia but also of England. • Answers might argue that the view in Interpretation A is less convincing as it suggests that the Mercian kings created a political system which led to a united England. Aethelbald and Offa did not appear to create a political system for the whole of England. • Answers might argue that Interpretation A is invalid as 	30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No set answer is expected. • At Level 5 and above answers will evaluate both interpretations, locating them within the wider historical debate about the issue and using their own knowledge, and reach a balanced judgement as to which they consider the most convincing about the issue in the question. • To be valid, judgements must be supported by relevant and accurate material. • Knowledge must not be credited in isolation, it should only be credited where it is used to analyse and evaluate the interpretations, in line with descriptions in the levels mark scheme.

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
	<p>Mercian influence was constantly challenged and fluctuated far more than the interpretation suggests.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In locating the Interpretations within the wider historical debate, answers might argue that Interpretation B argues that the extent of Mercian hegemony has been greatly exaggerated and that Mercian overkingdoms were not trial runs towards a united England. • In evaluating Interpretation B, answers might argue that it is valid as it highlights the complex nature of Anglo-Saxon politics at the time and warns that using labels such as ‘Mercian supremacy’ can obscure the uniqueness of political developments within particular regions. • Answers might argue that Interpretation B is correct and support this by reference to the difficulties Offa faced in dealing with royal powers in Wessex and Northumbria. • Answers might argue that Interpretation A also has some support for this view as it mentions the unity of Wessex before the time of Offa and ‘the strength of traditions that had gathered around it’. • Answers might argue that Interpretation B is given further support as it sets the issue of Mercian supremacy in the wider context of economic and religious change. • Answers might argue that Interpretation B is correct as it avoids a simplistic and linear view of how the move towards a unified England started to take shape. 		

Section B

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
2*	<p>To what extent was Augustine’s mission to Britain in 597 the most important influence on the process of Christianisation in the period from c.410 to c.800?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In supporting the hypothesis in the question, it might be argued that Augustine’s mission was highly significant as it laid the foundation for Christianisation to take place. Archbishop Theodore was able to build on the work of Augustine and create a better organised, more unified Church. • Answers might argue that the conversion of King Aethelberht of Kent by Augustine marked a turning point; from this time it was evident how the Church could enhance the status of kings. • Answers might consider that the Augustine mission of 597 was important as it resulted in the founding of the monastery at Canterbury; other monasteries were quickly built. • Answers might consider the founding of a see at Rochester (604) as an example of how rapidly Augustine’s influence spread. • Answers might consider the speedy Christianisation of the East Saxons and the building of St Paul’s cathedral in London. • In challenging the hypothesis in the question, it might be argued that although Augustine’s mission revitalised the Christianisation process there were more important influences on the conversion of the English. 	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No set answer is expected. • At higher levels answers might establish criteria against which to judge. • To be valid, judgements must be supported by relevant and accurate material. • Knowledge must not be credited in isolation, it should only be credited where it is used as the basis for analysis and evaluation, in line with descriptions in the levels mark scheme.

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answers might argue that Roman Christianity had survived after the end of Roman rule and that Christianisation was not new. • Answers might argue that the work of St. Patrick and the Celtic Church was more important, especially in the Christianisation of the northern English and Scotland. • Answers might argue that Augustine's achievements were short-lived and not as widespread as is sometimes argued. Fairly soon after conversion, the East Saxons and Northumbrians apostatised and got rid of their bishops. • Answers might argue that decisions made by the Synod of Whitby in 664 were the most important influence as, from this time, the Church in England could start to be unified under one primate. 		
3*	<p>To what extent was there a major change in economic activity in the period of the Early Anglo-Saxons from c.410 to c.800?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In supporting the hypothesis in the question, it might be argued that there was major change but it was of a regional nature; there was no such thing as an Anglo-Saxon economy. • Answers might argue that economic change was determined by demographic trends. The population of Britain and Ireland fell up to the end of the 7th century (partly as a result of outbreaks of the plague in the 540s and 664–687) and then recovered to reach about 1,850,000 by c.800. Population increase impacted on 	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No set answer is expected. • At higher levels answers might establish criteria against which to judge. • To be valid, judgements must be supported by relevant and accurate material. • Knowledge must not be credited in isolation, it should only be credited where it is used as the basis for analysis and evaluation, in line with descriptions in the levels mark scheme.

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
	<p>the level of effective demand and hence economic activity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answers might argue that change occurred in agricultural activity as a result of the formation of minsters (c.670s onwards). This, in turn, resulted in a move from farm clusters to multiple estates with at least one nucleated settlements and subsequent rises in the production of food. • Answers might argue that there was a change in craft working practices during the late 7th century; with the coming of minsters in lowland Britain there emerged more masons, carpenters, iron and copper workers and producers of parchment. • Answers might argue that economic change was also characterised by the growth of trade from the late 6th century. From c.675 to c.760 there was a significant growth in trading settlements (wics) and an increase in overseas trade with the Franks and Frisians. • In challenging the hypothesis in the question, it might be argued that it is difficult to measure change due to the lack of consistent and reliable data trends for indicators such as agrarian and industrial production levels. • Answers might argue that there was much continuity in that highland economies were dependant on animal husbandry (especially cattle) and lowland regions on arable farming (especially cereal production). • Answers might argue that tribute taking, a determinant of local economic activity, was prevalent throughout the period (although the variant of gift giving was more 		

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
	<p>sporadic).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answers might argue that economic activity was constantly linked with the control of local economies by warlords (up to the end of the 6th century) and kings. 		
4*	<p>‘Latin learning was the most important cultural development in Ireland and Britain from c.410 to c.800.’ How far do you agree?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In supporting the hypothesis in the question, it might be argued that the revival of Latin learning was vital for Christianisation as it was instrumental to the conducting of the sacraments and liturgy and the interpretation of holy texts (exegesis). Answers might argue that the work of Gildas and his unique style of writing in Latin inspired the production of texts characterised by the use of systematic grammar such as the <i>Hisperica Famina</i>. Answers might argue that Anglo-Saxon scholars such as Aldhelm (c.640–709) and the Hiberno-Latin ‘Faminators’ built on the classic texts left by the Romans to produce a distinctive style of Latin. This provided the base for Ireland and Britain to become an ‘intellectual powerhouse’. Answers might argue that there was a golden age of Latin scholarship in Ireland in the late sixth and seventh centuries which was characterised by the popularisation of newly available texts from the continent such as those written by Isidore of Seville. Answers might argue that the arrival of Theodore and 	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No set answer is expected. At higher levels answers might establish criteria against which to judge. To be valid, judgements must be supported by relevant and accurate material. Knowledge must not be credited in isolation, it should only be credited where it is used as the basis for analysis and evaluation, in line with descriptions in the levels mark scheme.

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
	<p>Hadrian in 669–670 was pivotal as they helped establish the Canterbury school; Aldhelm was greatly influenced by this school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In challenging the hypothesis in the question, it might be argued that Latin learning needs to be considered alongside developments in vernacular languages; writing in 731, Bede argued that five languages could be identified in mainland Britain. Thus, it has been said that a 'bilingual textual culture' was created. • Answers might argue that other cultural developments that were also important, such as those connected with insular Christian art and decorated gospel-books. • Answers might argue that decorated texts, such as the Lindisfarne Gospels (c.710–720), revealed much about Anglo-Saxon culture such as the relatively high level of artistic skill evident at that time. • Answers might argue that texts such as the Book of Durrow showed the fusing of artistic styles taken from metal working, stone-carving and jewellery making. • Answers might argue that there were important cultural developments in areas not directly linked to religious belief such as architecture and jewellery making. 		

Assessment Objectives (AO) Grid

Question	AO1	AO2	AO3	Total
1			30	30
2/3/4	50			50
Totals	50		30	80

Summary of updates

Date	Version	Change
November 2020	0.14	Updated copyright acknowledgements.

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