

A LEVEL
Candidate Style Answers

HISTORY A

H505
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Unit 1

Version 1



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Introduction

OCR has produced these candidate style answers to support teachers in interpreting the assessment criteria for the new GCE History A specification and to bridge the gap between new specification release and availability of exemplar candidate work.

This content has been produced by senior OCR examiners, with the support of the Subject Specialist, to illustrate how the sample assessment questions might be answered and provide some commentary on what factors contribute to an overall grading. The candidate style answers are not written in a way that is intended to replicate student work but to demonstrate what a **'HIGH LEVEL'** or **'MEDIUM LEVEL'** response might include, supported by examiner commentary and conclusions.

As these responses have not been through full moderation and do not replicate student work, they have not been graded and are instead, banded to give an indication of the level of each response.

Please note that this resource is provided for advice and guidance only and does not in any way constitute an indication of grade boundaries or endorsed answers.

Y101 Alfred and the Making of England 871-1016

Assess the reasons for the success of Edward the Elder in dealing with the Viking threat from 899 to 924.

High level answer

The combination of the changing nature of the Viking threat and the increased use of burhs, initially in conjunction with his sister Aethelflaed, were the major reasons why Edward was successful against the Vikings between 899 and 924. This success was also helped by his military strength, seen in a series of military and naval raids against the Danelaw, and through negotiations which saw men such as Raegnald accept Edward as his overlord.

Alfred's treaty with Guthrum, which resulted in the latter gaining authority over Essex, East Anglia, parts of Mercia and Northumbria changed the nature of the Viking threat and made it easier for Edward, and his sister Aethelflaed, to be successful against the Viking challenge. Instead of large scale Viking raids and attacks by 'Great Heathen' armies as had happened under Alfred, the Vikings established settlements in the area that became known as 'Danelaw.' It was much easier for Edward to encroach on this area than it was to defeat a large scale Viking army, such as those Alfred faced. This was because within the area of Danelaw there were a number of separate Viking communities that did not always collaborate to resist Saxon advances. In comparison with Alfred's rule, Edward did not always face well-coordinated armies and he was therefore aided by Viking logistical weakness.

Edward was able to exploit this change and was successful through his increased use of burhs. The stability the construction of these provided gave Edward a base from which to launch raids against the Vikings, which not only deterred invasion from them but also allowed him to regain control over former Saxon lands. He was helped in this process by his sister, Aethelflaed, who after the death of her husband, Aethelred in 911, played a significant role in the rule of Mercia. Nearly all of the burhs that were built and used as a launch pad for the raids were the result of collaboration between the two, with the majority built after 911. The construction of burhs was followed by a clear strategy: a burh was constructed, the local Viking army submitted and this was followed by the submission of the local people, resulting in Edward increasing his control over areas. This process can be clearly seen on the borders between Danelaw and the Saxon and Mercian lands, with the construction of burhs at Hertford to prevent Viking advances from East Anglia and the east midlands, a burh at Buckingham and further constructions on the northern, north-western and western frontiers of Mercia. The importance of the constructions in the success against the Vikings is clearly seen at both Witham and Buckingham. At Witham it was followed by the submission of people, who had previously been under Viking rule to Edward, whilst following the construction of the burh at Buckingham, the Danish commander of the army at Bedford, Thurketil, submitted and he was joined by other Danes, including the army leader from Northampton – and all achieved with the use of very little force. It is therefore clear that burhs were crucial as not only did they prevent Viking incursions, but imposed a threat in their own right that persuaded many Viking armies to accept Edward's overlordship. As the burhs were built either on the border of Danelaw or just inside the Vikings saw it as a strategy which would not only prevent their attacks, but also allow Saxon armies to use them as bases from which to launch attacks. By the end of the period the policy of burh construction was so successful that he had only to threaten an enemy campy for it to surrender.

Burhs were therefore also important as they provided bases for attacks against Viking armies. Both Edward and Aethelflaed used them, along with their navies, to regain territory that they claimed had originally belonged to the Saxons and Mercians. They also used them as bases from which to raid and plunder Viking lands, which also encouraged submission. These raids played an important role as it often encouraged peace negotiations, as happened with Raegnald in 920. However, these attacks also encouraged Viking retaliation, particularly around the Severn Valley and prevented Edward from launching some of his own raids and therefore raids and plunder were less successful than the construction of burhs in bringing about victory.

The role of Aethelflaed was important in increasing control, not only did she collaborate with Edward in the building of burhs, but she also led her own campaigns against the Vikings, most notably in 917-18. This was important as it led to the capture of both Derby and Leicester. She played a crucial role in helping to secure the Mercian kingdom, particularly in the north west from attack.

Edward also used other methods and tactics to regain land. In 920 he was able to persuade Raegnald, a Viking leader from Ireland who had come to Northumbria to accept him as overlord, but he also encouraged Saxon thegns to purchase land in Viking territory, as happened in Bedfordshire and Derby, so that they could prevent Viking expansion. He was also careful not to antagonize the areas he regained and often allowed Vikings, such as Thurferth, to keep their estates or allow Viking systems of administration to continue. As a result there was no reason for retaliation.

The changed nature of the Viking threat meant that the policy of using burh construction to regain an area was successful and allowed Edward to increase his control. According to Higham, Edward was able to use 'burh construction mixed with military force to establish a south-centred Anglo-Saxon kingdom.' However, he also used other more subtle methods, such as negotiation to secure and increase the kingdom and re-conquer the Danelaw, although how far he achieved this is a matter of debate among historians.

Examiner commentary

- The response is well focused. It has a clear argument, which is outlined in the opening paragraph and sustained throughout the answer. The argument is well supported with relevant and accurate details. The importance of the changed situation and the role of the burhs is clearly explained and justified with sustained evaluation. Other factors are also considered and further evaluation is evident in terms of the impact of raids and plundering on the success of Edward's policies. The sustained argument and evaluation means that the answer would be placed in level 6.

Medium level answer

The Viking threat that Edward had to deal with had somewhat changed as it appears that at sometime during Alfred's reign the nature of the Viking threat had changed from raiding to settlement. The settlement took place in the area known as Danelaw and there was concern that with an increasing number of settlers arriving from Scandinavia that other parts of England would be threatened because of the increasing number of settlers. However, Edward was able to deal with this threat, at times with help from his sister Aethelflaed, who was married to Aethelred, king of Mercia. He and his sister used a number of methods to deal with the Viking threat and this included the building of burhs, military campaigns and negotiation. By the end of his reign he, like his father, had been able to consolidate and extend his power.

Edward the Elder became king of the West Saxons on the death of his father, Alfred. He faced a succession dispute with his cousin Aethelwold, but he was killed in battle in 903. Edward's sister, Aethelflaed, was married to Aethelred, king of Mercia and he worked with them to help defeat the Viking threat. When Aethelred died he worked even more closely with his sister, building a series of burhs which helped to contain the Vikings in the Danelaw and prevent raids into the Midlands and the south.

The burhs were very important in dealing with the Vikings. Aethelflaed built a series of burhs on the eastern and northern borders of Mercia to stop Viking attacks there. Edward also built a series of burhs, such as that at Hertford to stop Viking raids from East Anglia. The two of them worked together after Aethelred's death in 911 to decide where new burhs should be built and these burhs were more than simply defensive to stop Viking attacks. This period saw a new period of burh building. They built a series of burhs within the Danelaw. These burhs imposed a threat on the area in which they were built as they were seen as intimidating and it often forced the local Viking army to surrender in that area and this was then followed by the submission of the local population to Edward's rule. As a result Edward was able to increase the area over which he ruled and take part of the Danelaw under his control. This can be seen for instance in 914 when Edward built a burh at Buckingham which led to the commander of the Danish army at Bedford submitting and he was soon joined by other Danish leaders from areas such as Northampton. Edward then went on to occupy Bedford, which further strengthened his control over the area. Therefore the building of burhs was important in lessening the threat from the Vikings of the Danelaw. They also helped in deal with the Viking threat as they prevented Viking attacks and imposed such a threat that the Vikings they had defeated acknowledged Edward as their overlord.

The burhs also acted as bases from which Edward could launch further attacks against the Vikings. They often launched raids and plundering attacks against the Vikings, which often turned into battles This policy started around 909 and

ended in 920 when the Welsh and Scottish kings, as well as the Viking Raegnald submitted to him. The attack on the Northumbrian Vikings resulted in peace negotiations, but also retaliatory attacks by Vikings which led to a major defeat at Tettenhall and the death of three Viking kings, further limiting the threat. These attacks were often followed by the construction of burhs and the threat of such action meant that by 918 he had only to threaten the enemy for them to surrender. However, the military success against the Vikings was not just the result of Edward's actions, but also Aethelflaed. She also launched successful campaigns against the Vikings in 917-918 and took Derby and Leicester. They also used their armies and navies to attack and regain land which they thought was rightly theirs. However, it was not just the skill of Edward and Aethelflaed that brought about victories, but also the weakness of the Vikings. The Vikings were not very well co-ordinated and had logistical weaknesses, which also helped bring about their defeat.

Edward was also willing to use negotiations and make deals with the Vikings. He encouraged thegns to buy land in Viking territory so that they could help to check Viking expansion. He was also careful that when he had defeated or gained their submission he did not rule harshly and encourage unrest. He sometimes allowed Vikings to keep their estates and used Viking administrative systems. This meant that the Vikings had less reason to threaten his rule.

Edward was also successful in dealing with the Viking threat from Ireland, particularly that of Raegnald. Raegnald came to Northumbria from Ireland and in 919 attacked York and this became worse in 920 when he was joined by his cousin, who attacked Mercia. Edward dealt with the threat by meeting with him in, it is believed, 920 where Raegnald accepted Edward as his overlord showing that negotiation as well as force was used to defeat the Viking threat.

It can therefore be seen that there were a number of reasons why Edward was successful in dealing with the Viking threat. He worked with his sister, and then after her death used his own authority in Mercia, to defeat the Viking threat. It was a combination of their skill, military power and the building of burhs that meant he was successful.

Examiner commentary

- There is some answer to the question as some factors are considered. The level of supporting detail is variable, with some knowledge of the construction of burhs but more generalized towards the end of the response. In places the answer is descriptive, but there is also some explanation and there is some line of argument, with stress on the role of the burhs and Edward's work with his sister. As a result the answer would reach the lower end of Level 4.

Y102 Anglo-Saxon England and the Norman Conquest 1035-1107

Assess the reasons for William of Normandy's victory at Hastings in 1066.

High level answer

William's victory at Hastings in 1066 was largely the result of his skill, which included both his preparations but also his military leadership. This skill allowed him to take advantage of the luck that presented itself and Harold's mistakes throughout the early autumn of 1066.

William was fortunate that Harold faced simultaneous attacks from both Normandy and the Viking force of Harald Hardrada. Harald's invasion came first and this meant that Harold was drawn north to face the Viking force, allowing William to land unopposed in the south of England and establish his base at Pevensey. Even this unopposed landing was fortunate as the peasant levies which made up much of the Saxon force were obliged to serve for only two months and had been disbanded on 8 September, just before William was able to set sail. The same was true of the Saxon navy, which meant that William was able to cross the Channel unopposed. Moreover, William was also fortunate that he was able to cross the Channel at the very time Harold was drawn north. He had been waiting for the wind to change direction for some time and he was therefore lucky that the change in direction coincided with Harold having to move north. The northern invasion was also fortunate for William as the march north and back again not only tired Harold's forces, but also depleted them as the battle at Stamford Bridge was particularly severe. However, despite these developments victory depended upon William's ability to take advantage of the situation.

The invasion from the Vikings inadvertently helped William. Hardrada's attack on York killed many Saxons and deprived the Saxon ears, Edwin and Morcar, of providing Harold with support later. In coming north to deal with the attack, Harold had also left the south undefended and although some historians have argued it was a mistake to move north, it can also be argued that Harold was unfortunate that the direction of the wind changed, allowing the Norman invasion. Although Harold was able to defeat Hardrada, the battle was long and large numbers were killed, with the Viking requiring only 24 of their original 300 ships to take them home. Not only had the march north been tiring, but Harold had also lost many men, particularly his strongest fighters, the housecarls, which weakened his force.

However, the northern invasion only helped William because of Harold's mistakes. Firstly he hurried back south and did not allow his soldiers to rest. In doing this he also failed to wait for reinforcements to arrive from other shires, which according to some accounts would have given him a force of up to 30,000 with which to confront William. Instead, perhaps because of his success against Hardrada, he was over-confident and thought that the same tactic of a surprise attack on William in the south would also be successful. In defence of Harold's actions he may have hoped to confine William to the area around Pevensey and thus protect the rest of Wessex from Norman rampage.

William was therefore very fortunate that the force he met at Hastings was both tired and depleted, however the length of the battle, unlike most Medieval battles suggests that it was close and therefore William's skill played a crucial role in securing victory. Not only had he prepared meticulously, but he also led his forces with skill. Even before the invasion, William had embarked on a propaganda campaign to assert his right to the throne and this culminated in gaining papal support, which encouraged many from across other areas of France, such as Aquitaine, to join his force and boost the numbers. The military preparation were also thorough, with large numbers of ships being built, soldiers were well provisioned, weapons made and a pre-fabricated castle built so it could be assembled quickly to offer protection after the landing. It was William's skill on the battlefield at Hastings that was crucial. The Saxon force was on the top of Senlac Hill and was protected by a shield wall, which if it remained intact would exhaust the Norman attacks and secure Harold victory or at least ensure another battle would be fought when Harold had all his forces. It was ultimately William's ability to take advantage of circumstances that allowed the wall to be broken, having failed in attacks against it on numerous occasions. Rumours of William's death had resulted in the Norman forces falling back and being pursued by many less well-trained Saxon peasants, which started to weaken the wall. It was this that led William to use the feigned retreat on at last two occasions which drew more poorly trained Saxons from the front line and broke the solidity of the wall and allowed the Normans to cut down the peasants and the Norman cavalry attack the Saxon line.

It is likely that if the front line of the Saxon forces had been composed of housecarls they would have had the experience not to be tricked and realised the importance of maintaining the wall. Instead, it allowed the Norman forces to get close to Harold and probably hack him to death, which meant there was no one left to rally Saxon forces, resulting in their ultimate defeat.

William had been lucky that he faced a weakened Saxon force, but it was not their lack of numbers that was crucial as the length of the battle shows, but their inexperience which led them to pursue the Norman forces. However, it was William's skill as a leader which allowed him to exploit this through the feigned retreat and break the shield wall. William was fortunate that the change in direction of the wind and the Viking invasion coincided, but he still had to be able to take advantage of these developments and it was his skill and preparedness that allowed it

Examiner commentary

- Consistently focused on the question, there is detailed support and argument.
- The factors are analysed and there is evaluation of the role played by each factor.
- A supported judgement is reached and therefore the answer would be placed in Level 6.
- The argument is sustained throughout and the view offered in the opening paragraph is developed and sustained throughout.
- There is a clear and well-structured argument.

Medium level answer

There are many reasons why William won the battle of Hastings in October 1066. Luck was a very important reason, but there were also other important reasons such as William's military skill and Harold's mistakes. The invasion by the Vikings in the north just before William's invasion was also important. In the essay I will look at these four factors and reach a conclusion as to which was the most important.

The first reason William was successful was because of the Viking invasion in the north of England. Harald Hardrada's invasion forced Harold to march his troops north to York to fight the Viking force. Harold attacked the Viking force as soon as he arrived and won a very hard battle against one of the fiercest fighters in Europe. The battle at Stamford Bridge resulted in the death of a large number of Harold's key soldiers, the housecarls, and this along with the rapid march back firstly to London and then Hastings when he heard of the Norman invasion would have made an exhausted army even more tired. It might also have given Harold a false sense of confidence in the tactic of attacking as soon as he arrived in the south.

The mistakes made by Harold were also important in his defeat. When he marched back from Stamford Bridge he could have waited in London for his men to recover from their march north and back again, which had been about 300 miles, and for reinforcements from Edwin and Morcar to arrive, which would have strengthened his army. However, because William had attacked the Godwin family lands in Wessex Harold hurried on to confront the Norman army despite the loss of many experienced troops at Stamford Bridge.

Another important reason was William's skill. He had been skillful in getting papal support as this helped him attract soldiers from across France and therefore gave him a large and powerful army, as well as motivating his soldiers by turning the invasion into a crusade. William and his knights were experienced warriors having fought in many battles in northern France and were therefore well-prepared. William had gained experience of leadership during these campaigns and this also helped. He also prepared well by building boats to ferry his soldiers over, and he ensured they were well armed and fed, even when they had to wait to cross the channel. He had a 'pre-assembled' castle made and this was brought over so that it could be erected to provide a base for the troops. He was skillful in attacking Harold's own lands as this encouraged Harold to attack him quickly and near the coast and therefore William did not have to move in-land from his base and supplies. During the battle he was also skillful, particularly with his use of the feigned retreat. He had been unable to breakdown the Saxon shield wall using archers and therefore Harold and his army was protected on the top of Senlac hill. However, William changed his tactics and by using the feigned retreat the Saxons thought they had won and the Normans were fleeing, so they broke from their tightly packed ranks. The Norman cavalry was able to turn round and attack the Saxons and therefore break the shield wall and attack the Saxon forces; soon after this they were able to kill Harold and defeat the Saxons.

However, luck was also another important factor. William was lucky that Harold had to disperse his levies before his invasion. The Saxon levies had served their time and returned home to gather in the harvest, this meant that the invasion was unopposed. William was also lucky that the wind changed direction at the very moment Harold had to go north to deal with the invasion from the Vikings. William had been waiting a long time to cross the Channel and he was lucky that with the campaigning season coming to an end the direction of the wind did change. As Harold had to go north William was lucky as it meant that his forces were not present on the south coast and again meant that the invasion was unopposed. It might also be argued that William was lucky that Harold's forces had been reduced in size as a result of the fighting in the north and that perhaps he had to use less well-trained fighters who were tricked by the feigned retreat.

It can be seen that there were many reasons for William's victory at Hastings, however as this essay has shown the most important reason was William's skill, but also luck. Without these factors William may not have won and Saxon England may have continued. However, he was also helped by the Viking invasion in the north and Harold's mistakes.

Examiner commentary

- This answer would be placed in Level 4.
- It considers and explains the role of a number of factors relevant to the question.
- It provides an answer to the question set and in places the explanation is well supported with precise evidence.
- However, the attempts at judgement are no more than assertions with no evaluation of the relative importance of the factors in William's victory.
- It is largely a list of the reasons why William won.

Y103 England 1199-1272

'The most important reason for the challenge to Henry III's power in 1258 was the reduction in power of local government.' How far do you agree?

High level answer

At first sight it would appear that it was the summoning of parliament in April 1258 to raise money to pay the Pope for the failed Sicilian adventure and the threat of excommunication and an Interdict that led to the challenge to Henry, rather than the reduction in power of local government. However, there were other reasons why Parliament and other groups were likely to challenge Henry's power and it was simply that the meeting provided the opportunity to do so. In particular, many magnates and gentry were angered by the domination of court and office holding by foreigners, particularly the Lusignans. There was also much disquiet with the way the country was being run, both nationally and locally.

The failure of the Sicilian scheme and the resultant threats from the Papacy of excommunication and an Interdict, unless the Papacy was paid for the cost of the enterprise so far, were evidence for many that the government was foolish and reckless. However, it is unlikely that the Sicilian affair alone would have provoked such a crisis as the security of the realm was never in danger. However, Henry's overseas policies had made the regime unpopular. The king had been unable to regain the lost lands in France, largely because he lacked the financial resources to raise a sufficient force to mount a campaign and dare not call parliament to ask for funds as they would have used it as an opportunity to criticize the king. As a result, he had turned his attention to acquiring an empire elsewhere, hence the Sicilian adventure. It was the demand from the Pope for £90,000 to cover the cost of the scheme so far that forced Henry to summon parliament as he had no other way of meeting the costs. The summoning of the assembly provided an opportunity for grievances about a range of issues to be aired and the king's power to be challenged.

Developments in local government were certainly an issue for many, particularly the gentry. Their rise in power and influence in the twelfth and early thirteenth century meant that they resented the changes that Henry had brought about during his personal rule and threatened their influence in the localities. They resented the appointment of foreigners and men from outside the county as sheriffs and the exploitation of the justice system to raise money for the king, which resulted in increased financial pressures. Counties were required to pay more money to the exchequer and therefore sheriffs had to adopt harsher methods, often using bribery and extortion. The increased demand for money meant that traditional ways and customs of raising funds in the counties were challenged. In order to achieve this, men from outside the county were brought in as they were more willing to exact the large amounts of money, as they did not have local loyalties. The gentry also objected to magnates escaping justice as the system became increasingly corrupt. However, although the gentry objected to the developments, it was the coming together of their grievances and magnate concerns, which were expressed in parliament in April 1258, which led to the challenge to Henry's power.

It was the magnates who provided the leadership for the challenge to Henry's power and their major concern was the role of foreigners in government. They particularly resented the power of Lusignans who, since their arrival in England after 1247, had come to dominate court and offices, acting as castellans and sheriffs. They often had regular access to the king and it was believed by many magnates that their exalted view of kingship had an impact on Henry. As a result of their arrival, and the presence of the Savoyards, most patronage was given to them which caused disquiet and added to the unpopularity of the government and helped to bring together those opposed to the government. The Lusignans were particularly unpopular because of their harsh methods of ruling and willingness to use violence, whilst protected by the king from the process of law. They also dominated the marriage market, which meant the magnates found it harder to secure good marriages for their children and that foreigners were being intruded into the ranks of the baronage. There is little doubt that these developments were crucial as a reason for opposition because the coup of 1258 aimed to remove Henry's Lusignan advisors.

Although Henry's Lusignan advisors were a major target of the king's opponents, they were also just scapegoats for the failings of the regime, which had reached a climax in the debacle of the Sicilian affair.

Other events, such as the failure to deal with unrest in Wales and the subsequent successes of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd suggested that the king was weak and, it was argued, listening to poor advice from his Lusignan advisors. Moreover, the barons argued that they faced financial hardship, as would the country because of the levying of scutage at the very moment it was suffering from a disastrous harvest that had left people starving. This financial crisis was made worse by a currency crisis and inflation caused by the drain of money to Italy for the Sicilian adventure. As a consequence, the country was under increasing pressure and the government, in the view of many summoned to parliament was unable to cope.

The meeting of parliament in April 1258 provided opponents with the opportunity to overthrow the king's advisors. Although the meeting was the direct result of the Sicilian adventure, the reasons for opposition were much deeper and largely centred around complaints about the king's advisors at both local and national level. It was the coming together of the magnates, barons and gentry in opposition that led to the challenge and complaints about local government and the methods used were just element of those complaints.

Examiner commentary

- The answer has a clear and well-developed line of argument. The judgements are fully considered and supported. Links between a range of issues are made and fully explained. There is a sustained focus on the demands of the question and the analysis is consistently of a high level and shows a very good grasp of the issues. The opening sentences of each paragraph introduce issues which are relevant to the question and are then explored in the paragraph and a supported judgement about their role is reached. The response would be placed in Level 6.

Medium level answer

There were many reasons why Henry III's power was challenged in 1258. Henry had summoned parliament to raise money to pay the Pope for the failure of his scheme to conquer Sicily and the threat he faced of excommunication and an Interdict. This demand for money was one reason why there was crisis and a challenge to Henry. However, there were many other reasons and the reduction in the power of local government as Henry reasserted his rights was another. There were also disputes at court, particularly over the role of the Lusignans and poor economic and social conditions which helped to cause disquiet.

The developments and changes in local government helped to cause the challenge to Henry's power. During the earlier period the gentry had been gaining power as the government, without a civil service became more dependent upon them. However, Henry after the minority and the early years of his personal rule began to change things and the customs and traditions of the counties were challenged, with foreigners appointed to the office of sheriff in some counties. Counties were also required to pay more money to the exchequer and therefore sheriffs had to adopt harsher methods, often using bribery and extortion. The increased demand for money meant that traditional ways and customs of raising funds in the counties were challenged. There was also a change in personnel as men from outside the county were brought in as they were more willing to exact the large amounts of money as they did not have local loyalties. This led for calls to reform local government. The appointment of lesser men as sheriffs also meant that magnates were able to avoid justice because of their influence and could therefore oppress their tenants. All these developments meant that local customs and traditions were being challenged and there was also a breakdown in the relationship between central government and the local areas as the crown reasserted its rights.

The overseas policies of Henry also made his regime unpopular. Henry had not given up hope of regaining the lands lost in France, but this required a large amount of money, which could only be obtained by heavy taxation. The early types of parliament did not want to grant large sums, probably believing that the campaigns would fail and Henry was reluctant to call them as they were used to air grievances. As a result, Henry used other methods to raise money, such as taxing the Jews. In the end Henry abandoned his policy in France and made peace with Louis, but he did not give up his search for an Empire elsewhere, and this led to the Sicilian affair, which was the immediate cause of the challenge to his rule. Henry hoped that it would allow him to show the Pope his piety, but he also agreed to fund the venture. However, Henry also agreed that if he failed to meet his obligation he would be excommunicated and England placed under a Papal Interdict. This put financial pressure on the country at a time of poor social and economic conditions, with a harvest failure in 1257, as Henry was obliged to pay the Pope £90,000 that had been spent on the campaign. The Pope would not agree to suspend the payments and so Henry had to call parliament in 1258.

The power of foreigners, particularly the Lusignans was a further cause of the challenge to Henry's power. The Lusignans had revolted against Louis during Henry's campaign in 1241 and some had come to England where they were welcomed by Henry and received rewards, ranging from sheriffs to castellan. This caused resentment in England and added to the growing dislike of the influence of foreigners because there were also the Savoyards. The Lusignans did not help their cause because their rule was harsh and they were protected from the law by the king, which only added to their unpopularity. Some of the foreigners, such as William of Savoy held high office, which meant they controlled access to the king which was unpopular. The foreigners also dominated the marriage market, which annoyed many English barons.

These problems all took place at a time of poor social and economic conditions. There had been a harvest failure and this led to famine, with many coming to London to look for food and others dying of hunger. The Sicilian affair had also meant that much money had been sent to Italy and this caused a currency crisis and deflation. There were also problems in Wales as the position of the marcher lords was under threat and there had been a rebellion in the north in 1256, which had been followed by Llywelyn making gains. Henry had been forced to withdraw.

All of these issues convinced many that the government was incompetent and the barons blamed the undue influence of the foreigners for this. The barons were further annoyed because they had not been consulted and the King appeared unwilling to take advice from the Great Council. They found allies in the gentry, who due to the financial pressures on the counties had also been angered and wanted reform. The Sicilian affair, which forced the calling of parliament allowed these groups and churchmen, who were also paying large sums to fund it, to come together and challenge Henry. Henry had been able to avoid challenges because he had not called parliament, but now he needed money it changed and opponents could ask for him to make changes. It allowed a group to come together and remove the Lusignans and force Henry to accept reforms.

Examiner commentary

- The response explains a number of reasons why Henry's power was challenged in 1258, but it does not reach a judgement. There are hints that it was because of a range of reasons and that his financial needs gave opponents the opportunity, but the argument could be much clearer. However, the answer does have a sound grasp of many of the issues that caused the crisis. There is sound support in many areas, but in other parts the support is more general. The list of reasons would take the answer into Level 4, but the lack of real judgement prevents it going higher.

Y104 England 1377-1455

Assess the reasons why there was so much unrest during the reign of Henry IV.

High level answer

The most important reasons for the unrest during the reign of Henry IV were his overthrow of Richard II and his weak claim to the throne, seen most clearly in the Epiphany Plot of 1400. These issues were exploited by nobles who wanted to further their own interests, which played a particularly important role in both the Hotspur and Percy revolts of 1403 and 1405, and in the Glydwr rebellion of 1400. Despite this unrest, however, it should also be noted that the latter years of Henry's reign saw much greater stability and therefore the 'so much' unrest is best applied to the early years of his rule.

Although Richard II renounced the crown of England in September 1399, most were in little doubt that he had been forced to abdicate by Henry Bolingbroke, who the day after Richard had renounced the throne, claimed it for himself. Despite this apparent transfer of power, it is hard to argue against the view that the act of seizure was illegal and difficult to justify. There was certainly a case to be made against Richard's rule, including mismanagement of the country and failure to uphold the sacred oath of kingship, but it was even harder to justify why Henry should succeed as his claim was not particularly strong. It is therefore hardly surprising that he faced a significant number of challenges in the early years of his rule.

A number had supported Henry Bolingbroke on his return to England because they believed that he had returned simply to reclaim his inheritance, but would not maintain their support once his aims changed and pressure was put on Richard to renounce his claim to the throne. Not only did they disapprove of the pressure, but they also considered Henry's claim that he was the legitimate heir, through Henry III, weak. They also discounted Henry's claim that he had been sent by God to recover the throne or that he had come to restore good governance. However, it was the weakness of his claim that was the major cause of unrest. It was impossible for him to rule out his claim through the female line and this gave other nobles an even stronger claim to the throne, most notably the descendants of the Earl of March, who had died in 1398. This claim was further strengthened by the fact Richard had considered naming March heir. Moreover, his decision to base his claim on descent through his mother Blanche meant that the Mortimer's also had a claim. As a result, unrest was inevitable as those with an apparently stronger claim asserted their right.

There was also the problem of Richard. Although he was in custody, he was not dead and therefore provided a figurehead and focus for opposition as he offered an alternative and legitimate claim. This was soon apparent with the Epiphany Plot of January 1400, in which former supporters of Richard attempted to restore him. In part this was an attempt by relatives, such as his half-brother and nephew to restore him, but it also involved many who had lost titles when Henry took the throne. Although they had lost titles, Henry had treated many of Richard's former supporters leniently and yet they were the very ones who were involved in the unrest, suggesting that his early policies had contributed to the unrest. The plot may have resulted in Richard's death, but it served only to encourage further plots and rumours as supporters claimed that he had escaped to Scotland and would return. Loyalty to Richard was a cause of unrest as troops were raised in the west country and former captains of archers in Cheshire were able to call out men.

A major cause of unrest was the action of the Percy's as they were involved in the unrest of 1403 and 1405. They had initially supported Henry as they believed that he had returned just to claim the Duchy of Lancaster. Henry, in claiming the throne, Hotspur would argue in his manifesto, had cheated the House of March out of their inheritance and therefore they were rebelling to support the rightful heir. However, their involvement was not simply altruistic; they felt their advice had been ignored by Henry over developments in Wales and they also wanted to build up their position in the north of England, which required Glydwr's unrest in Wales to be crushed and could be achieved only under another ruler. Moreover, they were also owed money by the Exchequer for their role as wardens in the north and therefore felt they were being treated unjustly by the regime. It was therefore a combination of factors that caused them to revolt, but all were closely linked to Henry's usurpation, even if the unrest in 1405 claimed it was due to taxation, government and defence of the realm.

Similarly, the unrest in Wales, led by Owain Glyndwr, was a result of a combination of factors, including personal gain, nationalism and the opportunity to exploit the absence of many nobles who were away fighting the Scots.

The initial rising had little to do with any legitimist claim to the throne, even though Richard had recruited from the area, instead it was based on nationalism and the desire to remove oppressive English rule. However, Glyndwr's seizure of Lord Grey and then Edmund Mortimer, uncle of the Earl of March widened the unrest. Henry refused to negotiate a ransom for Mortimer, who then joined Glyndwr, claiming he would fight to secure the rights of March. This decision resulted in the Percys deserting Henry and joining the unrest, turning it into a legitimist rebellion. Henry's subsequent measures against Wales ensured the unrest continued as the Welsh were forbidden to fortify their homes and had their role in administration limited.

There was so much unrest because of the weak foundations of the regime, but after 1405 Henry did not face a full-scale domestic rebellion again. His weak claim and usurpation of a legitimate ruler was the underlying factor in all the unrest. This was exploited by nobles, such as the Percy's, Glyndwr and even the Archbishop of York, Scrope, who had supported the unrest in 1405 and they used it to enhance their own ambitions.

Examiner commentary

- The answer explains reasons for the unrest and supports the explanation with relevant and accurate details. The response does offer a twist to the question as it notes that there was only 'so much' unrest in the first five years of Henry's rule. It does argue that it was the weakness of Henry's claim and the usurpation that were the main reasons and this is supported throughout, even when other factors are discussed with links being made between them. Their judgement could, in places, be more developed, but the links between the factors takes the response into Level 6.

Medium level answer

There were many reasons for the unrest during the reign of Henry IV. Much of it was due to him taking the throne and forcing Richard II to give up being king. Richard gave up the throne in September 1399 and the next day parliament accepted it and Henry Bolingbroke claimed the throne. Many believed that Richard had been forced by Henry to give up the throne and they did not approve of this as they thought Henry had come back to England simply to claim his lands and not the throne and therefore did not support his claim and still backed Richard, which caused unrest. After Richard's death there was still opposition as others had a claim to the throne and some felt that if Richard could be removed so could Henry.

The overthrow of Richard by Henry was a reason why there was unrest. Henry was seen by many as a usurper and that his claiming of the throne was illegal, with many believing that Richard had been forced from the throne once he was under Henry's control. Even if Richard had willingly given up his right to the throne, Henry's claim was not strong when compared to the descendants of the Earl of March, who had died in 1398. This claim was made stronger as Richard had considered naming him heir. Henry claimed the throne through his descent from Henry III through his mother and this meant that he could be challenged by the Mortimer family. Henry could have strengthened his claim if he had been elected by parliament, but this had not happened because he did not want to lose some of his prerogative. It was apparent that his weak claim was a major problem as parliament passed a series of acts between 1399 and 1406 to try and strengthen his and his descendants' position. His coronation also attempted to strengthen his right to rule as the ceremony stressed divine approval.

At the start of Henry's reign the fact that Richard was still alive was a cause of unrest. Richard was focus for opposition to Henry and he offered opponents both an alternative and legitimate ruler. His death, probably in the early months of 1400 should have removed him as a focus for opposition, but there were soon stories that he had been murdered by Henry, which did not help Henry's reputation and that Richard had escaped and gone to Scotland, which encouraged further plots. Henry did not help the situation as he refused the former king a state burial, which only added to the rumours that he was still alive. This meant that unless Henry was able to establish himself and be successful there would continue to be attempts to bring back Richard, encouraged by his former supporters.

The Epiphany Plot of January 1400 showed the threat that existed. Former supporters of Richard planned to seize Henry and his family at Windsor and restore Richard. It was organized by Richard's half brother and gained support from many who lost their titles when Henry came to the throne, suggesting that Henry would have to be very careful not to lose the support of more people and that those who had lost their positions were willing to rise.

It also showed that Henry's initial policy of being lenient towards former supporters of Richard had failed as they were still willing to rise up. Henry had failed to win the support of most magnates and nobles and this was why there was so much unrest.

There was also unrest because of the Percy family. The Percys had helped Henry since his return to England and had been hugely rewarded as Henry perhaps feared that they wanted March to replace Richard. However, some of Henry's decisions caused them to rebel. He removed Hotspur as captain of Roxburgh and other families gained influence in the area. They also found it difficult to get back money they were owed as wardens. They had played a crucial role in defeating the Scots at Homildon Hill, but as was Henry's right, he demanded they hand over the prisoners, which Hotspur refused to do and although Henry backed down tensions grew. Hotspur had also invaded southern Scotland and taken land there so was building up his power and wanted a solution to the growing crisis in Wales, which could best be achieved with a different ruler. They also believed that March had been treated unfairly and been cheated of his inheritance and that they had supported Henry only so he could regain the duchy of Lancaster and not take the throne. This led to the Percys raising rebellion in 1403 and their defeat at Shrewsbury. However, this did not end the unrest as in 1405 Northumberland rose with the support of other nobles and the Archbishop of York, who complained about taxation, government and defence of the realm. Unrest from these groups continued until 1408 when it was defeated at Bramham Moor.

Another reason, and linked to the Percy unrest, for rebellion was events in Wales. This started from a local quarrel between Owain Glyndwr and Lord Grey of Ruthin but was also caused by Glyndwr proclaiming himself Prince of Wales. He built up much support with his appeal to Welsh nationalism in an attempt to remove the harsh English rule. The rebellion developed because Glyndwr captured Edmund Mortimer, uncle of the Earl of March and Henry refused to negotiate a ransom. Glyndwr persuaded Mortimer to join him and when Mortimer said he would fight for the rights of Glyndwr in Wales and March as king it caused the Percys to desert Henry. Therefore, a rebellion that had begun as a nationalist rising became a legitimist battle which was made more difficult by the rebel appeal to France for help.

The large amount of unrest took place largely in the early years of Henry's rule. This shows that it was due to his weak and disputed claim to the throne. Some of the unrest was to restore Richard, but after his death was to put March on the throne as he had a stronger claim. It was also because nobles saw the opportunity to improve their position.

Examiner commentary

- There is some explanation and also some description of the reasons for unrest. The answer adopts a more chronological approach, which at times makes it difficult to see the reasons for unrest. Some of the material, particularly on Henry's claim, would benefit from being clearer. It would also have helped if the strength of the Mortimer claim and Richard's actual actions from landing to the actual claiming of the throne were explained more fully. However, it should be noted that there is much that can be said and it would not be possible to develop all the points in the time allowed. The knowledge is mostly sound and accurate. The mixture of description, explanation and some argument takes the answer to Level 4.

Y105 England 1445-1509 and Y106 England 1485-1558

How successful was the foreign policy of Henry VII?

High level answer

Henry VII's position as king was very insecure because of his weak claim to the throne and the Yorkist threat. As a result his foreign policy was closely linked to ensuring that he retained the throne. He faced the threat of invasion from other claimants and from England's traditional enemies, France and Scotland. There was also the possibility that other European rulers might exploit his weak claim to undermine him or, in the case of Burgundy to restore the Yorkist line. Therefore his main concerns were stop invasion and secure his dynastic position and the success of his foreign policy should be judged against these major concerns. Henry also inherited a weak financial position and therefore he wanted to avoid war as it was costly. Liked to this was the desire to increase trade as that would increase revenue and therefore strengthen the monarchy. However, when national security was threatened trade would become a secondary consideration.

There can be little doubt that Henry was successful in preventing invasion. Neither France nor Scotland launched a major attack against England. France was more concerned about the struggles in Italy and Charles signed the Treaty of Etaples in 1492, which included the agreement not to aid English rebels, whilst Scotland in the early part of Henry's reign was ruled by a minor following the death of James III in 1488. Although James IV, once he came of age gave support to Warbeck and wanted to launch an invasion of England, he realised that Warbeck lacked support and he would be better accepting the terms Henry offered. The Truce of Ayton, which later became a full peace Treaty following the death of Warbeck secured the northern border for Henry and was reinforced through the marriage of Henry's eldest daughter, Margaret to the Scottish king. This was a considerable achievement as no peace treaty had been signed between the two countries since 1328. Although there were still the occasional border raids and the Auld Alliance between France and Scotland was not broken, there was no invasion. However, Henry had been unable to prevent the French from annexing Brittany in 1491 and this gave France control of much of the Channel and a potential base from which to launch an invasion. Therefore, although on the surface he was more secure from invasion, the potential threat was still there.

Closely linked to the threat of invasion was the threat to Henry's dynastic security, but again he was largely successful. Through both marriage agreements and treaties he was able to win recognition for the Tudor dynasty, which helped to secure his position in Europe. The most significant achievement was the Treaty of Medina del Campo with Spain in 1489. This not only gained Henry recognition from the rising European power, but also included an agreement for Henry's eldest son, Arthur, to marry Catherine of Aragon. However, although the treaty was signed in 1489 she did not arrive in England until 1501, suggesting that Spain was unwilling to allow her to come to England until they were certain Henry was secure and the threat from Warbeck had been extinguished. Moreover, the death of Arthur within a few months of the marriage and the dispute over the Castilian inheritance following the death of Isabella weakened the agreement, although Henry did arrange for his second son to marry Catherine. The most serious threat to Henry's dynastic security was from Burgundy, where Margaret of Burgundy, sister of the former king, Richard III acted as a supporter of Yorkist claimants and provided aid to both Pretenders, Warbeck and Simnel. Burgundy was also important as the major centre of trade for English cloth. Henry was initially less successful in his policy towards Burgundy as he was forced to place an embargo on trade between 1493 and 1496 following the support given to Warbeck. It was only in 1506 when Philip of Burgundy was forced, through a storm, to seek shelter in England that Henry was able to improve his security by forcing Philip to sign a treaty in which he agreed to hand over the Yorkist claimant, the Duke of Suffolk. Therefore, although Henry had been able to improve his security it was not without its difficulties and it was only towards the end of his reign that the potential threat from Burgundy was nullified, and that through luck.

Henry was able to use his foreign policy to help improve his financial position. Although his weak financial position meant that he wanted to avoid war, he did go to war against France in 1492. This was successful as not only did it increase his credibility at home following the failure to prevent the annexation of Brittany, but it also occupied the nobility and resulted in a very favourable peace treaty.

Henry was clever in that the invasion was launched at the end of the campaigning season so no major battle took place and with Charles more concerned with Italy, Henry negotiated a favourable peace. This re-established the French pension, which brought in £5000 per year, but also resulted in France agreeing to pay the arrears from it, thus further boosting Henry's income. He was also successful in avoiding war with Scotland as, having raised a force to invade Scotland, the Scots fearing defeat agreed to peace.

Henry did improve trade, but only when it did not threaten security. He was able to win a very favourable trade agreement with Burgundy, the *Malus Intercursus*, when Philip sought refuge, but this was only short-lived because it was so favourable. However, he was able to restore the *Mangus Intercursus* which had been signed in 1496, which allowed English merchants to sell their goods wholesale anywhere in Philip's lands, except Flanders, without paying tolls. He was also able to sign trade agreements with Portugal and Florence, but his attempt to limit the power of the Hanseatic League did fail.

Although much of his foreign policy was a success, the last years did see a weakening of England's position. Henry's attempt to negotiate a marriage agreement for himself with a variety of European powers failed and Spain and France reached an agreement, which became the League of Cambrai and from which England was excluded. However, although England was isolated at the end of Henry's reign, there was no significant threat to the Tudor succession or of invasion, perhaps in part because the major conflict was in Italy where England had little interest. Aware of England's limited power he was able to secure his position and gain recognition through a series of marriages and treaties so that his major concerns of security and invasion were managed successfully.

Examiner commentary

- The answer is focused throughout on the issue of 'success'. It establishes a set of criteria against which to judge success: Henry's aims and these are analysed and a judgement reached as to the success in each area. The argument is well supported with relevant and detailed knowledge. The issues are evaluated and an overall judgement is reached. As a result the answer would be placed in Level 6.

Medium level answer

Henry's foreign policy involved was mostly concerned with his relationship with France, Scotland, Spain and Burgundy. His claim to the English throne was weak and therefore he wanted to strengthen his position and prevent foreign powers invading or supporting other claimants, such as Warbeck and Simnel. The fact he passed on throne to his son, Henry VIII suggests that he was successful to some extent as foreign powers did not remove him.

France was a major threat to England, particularly as it was also allied to Scotland. In 1492 Henry raised a large invasion force and invaded France in October 1492 to assert his claim to the French throne as English kings usually did. The invasion took place at the end of the campaigning season and ended without any major conflict. It therefore appeared as if Henry had failed as he had spent a lot of money and had not gained any land or victories. However, it was the French king who offered Henry peace and signed the Treaty of Etaples which gave Henry an annual pension of £5000, which was of considerable financial benefit to Henry given his weak financial position. Charles also promised not to support English rebels, particularly Warbeck, which helped to strengthen Henry's position at home. Henry was also able to avoid war with France for the rest of his reign, which was a success as it meant that he did not have to spend money on fighting.

Scotland was allied to France and as it bordered England in the north was able to attack England easily. It was also England's old enemy and could cause Henry trouble and give support to France. In 1486 Henry signed a three year truce, but in 1495 the king of Scotland gave his support to Warbeck and allowed him to marry his cousin. In response England raised a force, but when Henry offered the Scottish king peace it was accepted. The Truce of Ayton was signed in 1497 and Warbeck left Scotland, when he was executed in 1499 the Truce became a peace treaty. The peace was added to by the marriage of Henry's eldest daughter, Margaret to the Scottish King, James. This was a success as it stopped war between the two countries for the rest of Henry's reign and meant that the border with Scotland was more secure.

Spain was the new power in Europe after the marriage between Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile. Henry was able to sign the Treaty of Medina del campo with Spain in 1489 and the treaty agreed to the marriage between Henry's eldest son, Arthur, and Catherine of Aragon. The treaty also stated that Spain would not help any rebels against England and gave England some trade benefits. The treaty was important because Henry had gained recognition from a major power and Spain would not have agreed to the marriage unless they thought Henry was secure on the throne.

Catherine did not arrive in England until 1501 and Arthur's death soon after made it less of a success, but Henry proposed that she should marry his second son and the betrothal took place in 1503, which suggests that Henry was able to maintain the link.

Burgundy was important to Henry for two reasons. It was the most important area for English trade as English cloth was sold at Antwerp and Margaret of Burgundy, Richard III's sister, who lived there supported other Yorkist claimants to the English throne and therefore tried to overthrow Henry. This made it a particularly important area. In the period from 1493 to 1496 Henry placed a ban on trade with Burgundy because of the support it gave to Warbeck, which damaged trade and was therefore not a success. Towards the end of Henry's reign the Archduke of Burgundy was forced to take shelter in England during a storm whilst travelling to Castile. This was fortunate for Henry who persuaded Philip to sign an agreement handing over the Duke of Suffolk, who was a Yorkist. Henry also negotiated a very good trade treaty with him, the *Malus Intercursus*, which gave English merchants a lot of benefits as duties were not to be imposed on English cloth. This was a great success, but was very unpopular with Burgundy and was abandoned.

Henry also made trade agreements with Portugal and Florence, which helped English trade. He also signed trade treaties with Denmark and Norway, but failed in his attempt to weaken the power of the Hanse.

There were many successes in Henry's foreign policy as he achieved peace with France and Scotland. His son married Catherine and his sister married the king of Scotland. The treaty with Spain meant that he was allied to a major power. He was also able to improve the situation with Burgundy. However, he also had failures as Burgundy supported Warbeck and it was only at the end that Suffolk was handed over.

Examiner commentary

- The question is addressed and there is some evidence of detailed knowledge – with the treaties, marriage agreements and trade treaties. There is argument in each paragraph, although it is not well developed. The essay has structure as each country is dealt with in a separate paragraph, although the section on trade is weak. The conclusion does not reach a judgement as to 'how successful'; but is simply a summary of success/failure and therefore the answer could go no higher than Level 4 and is likely to be towards the lower end.

Y107 England 1547-1603

How effectively did Elizabeth I deal with the problems she faced in 1558?

High level answer

The problems that Elizabeth faced when she came to the throne in 1558 were challenging, with many of the political nation serious doubting her ability to survive. Given this situation it must be argued that she was effective as not only did she survive the early challenges, but continued to rule until her death in 1603. It was a combination of religious and foreign problems that were the greatest threat, but she was particularly astute in managing these and although she was unable to deal effectively with the financial situation at the start of the reign, this was also well-managed until war with Spain in the 1580s.

The religious situation was a major problem for Elizabeth. She was effective in dealing with this as, although the country was largely Catholic and she was protestant, and in the eyes of many Catholics illegitimate as the child of Henry's marriage to Anne, she was still able to avoid unrest and introduce a protestant settlement. Her moderate settlement avoided conflict both at home and overseas and she was able to get the Acts of Uniformity and Supremacy through parliament, despite a Catholic House of Lords by arresting two bishops and agreeing to change her title of 'Supreme Head' to 'Supreme Governor'. This change placated some moderate Catholic opinion and the terms of the Acts were also effective in winning support as when communion was received the words said included the forms in both the 1549 and 1552 Prayer Books. Moreover, the 'Black Rubric' of the 1552 Prayer Book which denied the bodily presence of Christ at communion was also omitted, which encouraged some Catholics to accept the changes. Although the settlement was still protestant, it adopted a middle way or 'via media' and therefore was effective in winning support from moderates on both sides of the religious divide. Although it could be argued that it was not effective in winning over the more extreme Catholics or Puritans, its effectiveness can be seen in that it lasted for Elizabeth's whole reign and England avoided the religious wars that broke out in France in the 1560s.

The religious problem was closely linked to the foreign situation as not only was Elizabeth seen as illegitimate by Catholics at home, but also overseas and was therefore in danger of attack from Catholic powers such as Spain or France, but was effective in preventing this. In terms of dealing with Spain, Elizabeth was particularly effective as not only did she prevent an attack, but when Philip of Spain offered her his hand in marriage she was careful not to turn down the offer outright and with the ornaments in the royal chapel was able to claim to the Spanish ambassador that the religious settlement was largely Catholic. Moves such as these resulted in Philip persuading the Pope not to excommunicate the Queen, which was a triumph for Elizabeth. Similarly, in dealing with France she was able to end the war that her predecessor, Mary had involved England in and also prevent France from joining with the Scots, through the Auld Alliance, to attempt to put Mary Stuart on the English throne. Although the French encouraged Mary, who was married to the French Dauphin to state her claim through using the English arms on her coat of arms, the overthrow of her by Protestant Lords in Scotland in 1560 removed the immediate danger. Therefore, although initially not due to Elizabeth's policies, but rather good fortune, the threat from the French through Scotland was successfully limited, but her subsequent policy of aiding the Protestant lords was effective as French influence in Scotland was removed and the northern border made more secure.

One of the major criticisms of Mary's rule had been the size and unwieldy nature of her council. Elizabeth was certainly much more effective in this area. She herself stated 'I consider a multitude doth make rather discord and confusion than good counsel'. She did keep on some Marian councillors because of their experience and expertise, but she also brought in her own supporters, most notably William Cecil. In using some of the members of the nobility she recognized their role as natural advisors and this was important in gaining their support. This was effective in providing a balance of opinion, but also in gaining the loyalty of important members of society.

There were two areas where Elizabeth was less effective in the early years of her reign. The first area was finance. She had inherited a debt of £227,000 from her sister, Mary, but was unwilling to ask parliament for more taxes for fear of provoking unrest given that many still doubted her claim to the throne.

Although she was partially effective in lowering the debt by ending the war with France, it was not until much later in the reign that she was solvent, which meant that it was a greater problem raising loans at a reasonable rate. The second issue was that of Mary Stuart, who many Catholics saw as the rightful heir and ruler. Although she had been removed from the throne of Scotland, Elizabeth was unable to effectively remove the threat in the early years, although it was not until 1569, after Mary's arrival in England, that she provoked actual unrest and a direct challenge to Elizabeth. However, Mary's presence was always there and could undermine Elizabeth and even when Mary was eventually executed in 1587 it did not end the problem, as it was a factor in the launch of the Armada of 1588. Despite this difficulty, Elizabeth was able to diffuse the problem until she was secure and therefore it is possible to argue that she was effective in preventing a direct challenge in the early years when she was more vulnerable.

Elizabeth was effective in dealing with the problems she faced. Her survival in the face of great odds is testament to that, and the problems that she was not able to deal with directly, she was able to manage effectively so that they were resolved or at least contained until later in her reign when she was more secure. In some ways it was her good fortune, but her policies were effective and by adopting a moderate approach she placated and bought herself time, which with the help of her advisors allowed her to secure her position.

Examiner commentary

- This is a well-argued response. The answer focuses on the key word 'effective' and does not lapse into a discussion of whether she was successful. There is precise evidence, particularly of the religious settlement to support the claims made. Each paragraph considers both sides of the argument before reaching a judgement on the issue discussed. The interim judgements are then developed in the conclusion. This would be placed in Level 6.

Medium level answer

Elizabeth I came to the throne in 1558 after the death of her sister Mary I. Mary I was unpopular with many and her reign was seen as harsh with large numbers burned because of their religious beliefs. The country also suffered from a flu epidemic and poor harvests so people hope for a better time under Elizabeth. She was the daughter of Anne Boleyn and was therefore protestant and wanted to make the country protestant, but Mary had turned England back to being Catholic. Elizabeth faced a number of problems particularly associated with religion but she was quite effective in some ways.

As I have already said Elizabeth was protestant and because she was the daughter of Anne Boleyn was seen as illegitimate by many Catholics. She would want to make the country protestant again, as it had been under Edward VI but this would be difficult because Mary had restored Catholicism and England was linked to the Papacy again. It was also the case that most of the country was Catholic and this would make the task harder as they had welcomed Mary as Queen and there had been little opposition to the policies. Despite this Elizabeth was able to make the country protestant as the Acts of supremacy and Uniformity were passed in her first year, showing that she was effective.

She was also effective because she was able to prevent England from being attacked by foreign powers, such as France or Spain who were both Catholic and did not think that she should be Queen. She was effective in dealing with Spain, whose ruler Philip II had been married to Mary and now wanted to marry Elizabeth. She did not want to marry him but did not refuse directly and therefore he kept hoping and this meant he did not attack and also helped to prevent the Pope from excommunicating Elizabeth because of her religion meaning that she was effective in this area.

Elizabeth was also effective in establishing a council to help her govern the country. This was important because the Council under Mary was very large and did not work well. Elizabeth established her own Council and brought in men such as Cecil who she could trust to give good advice and therefore was successful in establishing a government that could run the country as she lacked experience.

She was also effective in ending the threat from France. Mary had taken England to war against France, in part to help her husband. The war had not gone well for England and they had lost Calais, their last lands in France, and it was costing a lot of money. Elizabeth was able to make peace with France and this saved money and helped to protect England from attack, whilst also holding out the chance that Calais might be returned later.

Elizabeth was also not always effective. This was true with the religious problem. Although the Acts were passed it was only with difficulty that they passed the House of Lords. The bishops of Lincoln and Winchester were arrested to prevent them from voting against the Acts and Elizabeth accepted the title 'Supreme Governor' rather than 'Head' of the Church so that it passed, suggesting that she was not always effective.

Although the laws were passed it did not end the catholic threat in England, where with large numbers of Catholics there was still the threat of rebellion, which could be aided by foreign powers, particularly France. There was the problem of those Catholics who thought that Elizabeth was not the rightful ruler, as was seen later in 1569 and they might with foreign help rise up. She also had the problem of Protestants, particularly the returning exiles, who wanted a more Protestant settlement and this made it very difficult for her. She was unable to satisfy both them and the Catholics.

She was also unable to deal with the Catholic threat of Mary Stuart, who many Catholics saw as the rightful heir. Mary had French support having married the Dauphin and the French were eager to support Mary's claim. There was nothing Elizabeth could do about this or the encouragement France gave to Mary to use the English coat of arms and assert her claim. Elizabeth was just fortunate that in 1559 the Protestants in Scotland overthrew her as this reduced the threat.

The finances of England were under strain when Elizabeth came to the throne because of the war with France and Mary had died with a debt of £227,000. As her claim to the throne was not strong, Elizabeth was unable to risk raising taxes and therefore had to 'live off her own.' She could also not exploit her income because she was insecure and parliament would not expect to be asked for more money, unless there was a real risk of attack. Elizabeth also needed to repay her debts so that she would be able to borrow again in the future. Elizabeth was unable to do anything about this immediately and simply had to cut her expenditure.

It can therefore be seen that Elizabeth was effective in some places and less effective in others, but she was able to survive the threat, which many did not expect and therefore was more effective than ineffective.

Examiner commentary

- The question is addressed, but it is a list of where she was effective and then where she was less effective. The attempt at a judgement is not developed or supported and therefore does not take the response into the higher levels. However, there is some argument and some support (figures on the debt, names of the bishops who were jailed) and therefore the answer must be placed in Level 4.

Y108 The Early Stuarts and the Origins of the Civil War 1603-1660

How far were James I's financial problems of his own making?

High level answer

There is little doubt that James played a considerable role in causing his financial problems, due to his extravagant spending. However, to see it as the only cause would be a mistake as both the financial system and the attitude of parliament were also important, but it was James's outlook and attitude that made a difficult situation worse.

The financial situation that James inherited was poor. This was not because of the £420,000 debt he inherited as much of that would be covered by the 1601 grant which was yet to come in. The problem was the actual system itself. Not only was the subsidy, the main parliamentary tax, only collected when parliament agreed, but the amount brought in by the subsidy had declined drastically from £137,000 under Elizabeth to £72,000 by the 1620s, reducing income from it by nearly half. This was because households were assessed by local commissioners who undervalued estates and possessions to avoid unpopularity – the duke of Buckingham whose income was £400,000 was assessed at £400. The situation had been exacerbated by the rapid inflation of the later years of Elizabeth that meant the income that did come in purchased even less, probably about a fifth, and that James needed more simply to cover his expenses.

However, these problems were not helped either by James's financial outlook or his political beliefs. James certainly contributed to his financial problems by his uncontrollable extravagance. He believed that England, after the poor financial situation in Scotland, was a 'land of milk and honey' and therefore used the opportunity to reward his Scottish favourites, with the Earl of Carlisle commenting 'Spend and God will send.' James spent large amounts on court entertainment, with double dinners where a meal was brought in and discarded without being eaten and then a more lavish meal was produced. It could be argued that after the frugal nature of Elizabeth's court such entertainment was needed, but he gave away some £80,000 per year compared to Elizabeth's £30,000. The size of the court was increased, which only added to costs and large amounts were spent on tournaments, balls and masques, not to mention art or the £185,000 spent on jewels in nine years. In this sense it is clear that the financial problems were of his own making. However, some of the spending was essential. James, unlike Elizabeth was married with a family and therefore both his wife and eldest son had their own households which had to be maintained. He also had to pay for the marriage of his daughter, Elizabeth, an expense that Elizabeth I did not face. Although therefore James was not solely to blame, his extravagant spending also affected his relations with parliament who were reluctant to provide further funds when they saw the waste and it made it more difficult for James's advisors to argue that royal income was insufficient.

The situation was not helped by some of his advisors, who saw their posts as an opportunity to make money for themselves, by syphoning off income, rather than addressing the financial issues. James's first Lord Treasurer, Thomas Sackville, was known as 'Lord Fillsack' because he enriched himself from his role. Similarly Buckingham, a royal favourite was rewarded excessively. Cranfield, another Lord Treasurer saw his income rise from £2500 in 1614 to £28000 by 1624, suggesting he was using his position to enhance his financial position. In such circumstances it is therefore not surprising that one MP compared the situation to a 'leaky cistern' where money went out as soon as it came in, further adding to their reluctance to deal with the problem.

James's own beliefs only added to parliament's reluctance to solve the problems. His belief in Divine Right meant that parliament was unwilling to offer a long term solution as they believed that they would no longer be summoned once James's financial problems had been solved. Moreover, they did not trust the king to curb his spending and this is reflected in the failure of the 1610 Great Contract, which would have offered a solution to the financial problems. Although discussions appeared to recognize that the current financial position did not bring in sufficient funds and reform was needed, parliament was unwilling to agree because of James's extravagance, the immoral court behaviour and the absence of war, which meant defences were not needed.

James's views on Divine Right were just one of a number of unwise views and actions that impacted on his financial position. This was also seen with the collection of customs duties. The income from these increased rapidly, but by farming out the collection the crown did not benefit, nor could they abandon this process as there were not enough reliable collectors.

James also tried to raise money, as Elizabeth had done, from selling monopolies, but this was unpopular as it put prices up and therefore made parliament even more critical and less likely to grant funds. Other policies, such as the selling of titles or the Cockayne Project also failed to bring in sufficient funds and only added to the criticism from parliament, making it even less likely that they would provide the funds or agree to the reform that even they had acknowledged was needed.

There is little doubt that James contributed to his financial problems through his extravagance and ill-judged actions and beliefs, but to apportion all the blame on the king would be wrong. He certainly made a bad situation worse, but circumstances and the attitude of parliament were also important. The circumstances meant that income was not sufficient to maintain the royal household, but parliament was reluctant to address the issue as they feared for their position and believed income was being wasted, nor did they want to raise taxes or reform the assessment as the burden would fall on them. The failure of the negotiations surrounding the Great Contract is a clear example of the interdependence of these issues, with neither side willing to compromise sufficiently due to the lack of trust between them.

Examiner commentary

- The answer is consistently focused on the question and shows a high level of analysis. Links between the various factors are made and fully explained. Analysis is supported by relevant and accurate details, which reinforce the line of argument throughout the essay. There is judgement, which is developed and consistently and convincingly sustained to produce a very strong response. It would therefore be placed in Level 6.

Medium level answer

There were many reasons for the financial problems that James I faced. He was to blame for some of them, but they were also due to parliament and the situation he inherited so it was not just his fault.

James had experience of ruling Scotland which was a very poor country and when he came to the English throne he believed that it was the 'land of milk and honey' and therefore he could spend and reward his friends and favourites. One of his friends had said 'Spend and God will send' James spent a lot of money entertaining and was famous for his double dinners at which the food was served and sent away uneaten to be replaced by a more magnificent meal, which wasted a lot of money. In 1621 one such meal cost over £3000, which was about the income of a wealthy landowner. James also gave a lot of money to his favourites, giving away over £80,000 a year by 1610. James also spent a lot of money on himself buying jewels and the court, where he increased the number of courtiers, meaning more had to be spent in keeping them. He also spent a lot on court entertainment, such as tournaments and masques.

Unlike Elizabeth, James also had to spend money supporting a family. Both his wife and his eldest son had their own households to maintain. He also had to pay for the funeral of Henry and then, the following year, the marriage of his daughter. The two events cost over £100,000 but Elizabeth because she was not married did not have such expenses so it is unfair to blame James for this.

James also inherited a large debt of £400,000 but this was not as bad as it appeared as there was still money to come in from a grant made by parliament in 1601. This meant that his financial position was not as bad as it first appeared and with the defeat of rebellion in Ireland and then the ending of the war with Spain in 1604 should have made his position much better. However, the high rate of inflation, particularly in the last years of Elizabeth's reign meant that the value of his income was much less. This was not helped by the fact that the amount brought in by subsidies had gone down by 1621 to nearly half its value. This was because the assessment was usually under-valued as it was carried out by local people who did not want to become unpopular.

Parliament was also reluctant to give James enough money. They expected him to 'live of his own' except in times of emergencies. They would not give James money for a number of reasons and therefore they did not help solve his problems. They believed that he spent too much and any money that they gave him would be wasted on gifts. They were also concerned about James' belief in the Divine right of Kings and thought that if James was given enough money he would not summon parliament again. Therefore by limiting the amount of money he was given they believed that he would have to keep summoning them.

The situation was made worst by some of James' advisors such as the Lord Treasurer, Thomas Sackville. He used his position to gain money and was known as Lord Fillsack. The same was true of James' favourite, George Villiers who became the Duke of Buckingham on whom the king lavished lots of gifts, which made parliament even more unwilling to give the king money.

There were attempts to try and raise extra money but most of them failed, not always because of James. However, the raising of customs duties was a success so James cannot always be blamed for his financial problems as efforts were made. The greatest attempt to try and solve the king's financial problems was the Great Contract of 1610, but this failed. It would have given James a regular income but the lack of trust between the king and parliament meant the agreement failed. Parliament feared they would not be called again and disapproved of James' court and its behaviour so were unwilling to give money. However, the attempts to try and solve the financial problems show that James' income was not enough and therefore he was not solely to blame – his income just was not enough.

There were many reasons for James' financial problems. His spending did not help the situation as he spent much more than Elizabeth and gave lots of gifts and rewards. However, the system of raising taxes was out of date and inflation had reduced the value of his income so that there were many reasons for the financial problems.

Examiner commentary

- The question is addressed. There is some description of the problems but also some analysis and explanation. The supporting detail, particularly at the start of the response is quite strong and supports the points. The answer is therefore a mixture of description, analysis and explanation. It is mostly well structured, although the latter part does jump around. The conclusion is reasonable and does offer a valid explanation, which has been largely demonstrated in the main body of the essay and therefore the answer could be placed in Level 4.

Y109 The Making of Georgian Britain 1678-c.1760

To what extent did Walpole owe his long period in office to royal support?

High level answer

Although royal support was important for Walpole's tenure as principal minister from 1721 to 1742, it was not the most important reason for his domination. His domination was the result of a combination of factors, which was the result of support in parliament due to his management of it and the success of his policies. This is apparent from the fact when he lost control of parliament over his war policies in the 1740s he fell from power.

Royal support was a factor in Walpole's domination of politics. He was aware of its importance as he ensured that he maintained both George I and George II's favour by making certain that their financial needs were met by the House of Commons. However, this meant that he had to be able to manage the Commons, suggesting that his skills there were just as important, if not more. Walpole was also aware that his policies had to appeal to the king. George I had initially not been a supporter of Walpole, but his success in covering up the South Sea scandal and in preventing the Waterbury plot won him royal approval and this continued throughout the period by persuading parliament to increase the Civil List when George II came to power and by not interfering in the appointment of military officers. Walpole was aware that royal support was important and to achieve this he also controlled, as far as possible, access to the king and used the monarch's mistresses to influence them so that only his view and policies were conveyed to the king. Although, he was therefore aware of the need to remain in favour with the king, he was also aware that royal ministers also had to have the support of parliament and therefore followed policies that appealed to both the king and parliament.

Walpole's management of parliament was crucial in remaining in power. This was achieved through two methods; firstly by popular and successful policies and secondly through managing parliament. The importance of popular policies was particularly important. He dropped unpopular measures, such as a bill to punish Edinburgh for the Porteous Riots and the Excise Scheme. Walpole was also determined to maintain the support of dissenters and therefore passed annual indemnity acts, which freed them from dismissal for failure to take Anglican communion. Walpole had also brought the country stability and peace, which meant that taxation was low and that trade and prosperity increased, benefiting those in power. The importance of popular policies in keeping Walpole in power became even more evident in the late 1730s and early 1740s. His failure to assert British dominance overseas, through his desire to avoid unnecessary war, allowed him to be challenged. Ultimately he was forced into the War of the Austrian Succession, suggesting that he was losing his control and his resignation following the inept handling of the war is a clear demonstration that when his policies failed his position was vulnerable and that parliamentary, rather than royal support was vital for his survival.

He had been able to maintain that support for so long not just because of his policies, but also because of his skill in managing parliament. Walpole developed a 'court party' of loyal supporters by using bribery and patronage, which gave him a secure base of support, but even if this 'party' reached 180 MPs as some historians have argued, it did not give him a majority in the Commons. He also needed the support of 'country MPs' who did not seek office and he was able to achieve this by explaining his policies to them at private meetings and dinners and by using his friends to persuade them to support him. However, it was not just his management of these MPs that gave him a majority. The amount of patronage available was increased as minor appointments in government were brought under his control. He was also able to influence elections as many seats were controlled by the Treasury and Admiralty, or by his political allies such as Newcastle. Walpole was also skillful at managing debates, using delaying tactics to prevent measures he opposed being passed and through a close relationship with the speakers, who despite their supposed independence, usually supported him.

He would not have remained in power for so long without pursuing policies that were popular with both parliament and the monarch. This was evident with his fall from office in 1742. He was politically astute and realised when to abandon unpopular policies so that his position was not challenged, as over the Porteous riots and the Excise. George I and George II maintained their support for him as, although they were able to choose their own ministers, he was able to control parliament and negotiate the passage of policies they supported. Only when his ability to manage parliament, even though he still had royal support, did he fall from power supporting the view that it was popular policies and the ability to manage parliament that were the most important reasons for his long tenure of office.

Examiner commentary

- The answer is consistently focused on the question and pursues a consistent argument throughout. It explains why royal support was important, but argues that other factors were more important and supports this view through the evidence of his fall from power. The argument is well supported and although events are not described in detail, the answer suggests that knowledge and understanding of them is strong. The judgement reached in the conclusion follows logically from the rest of the response and has been supported and is reinforced. The answer was therefore placed in Level 6.

Medium level answer

Walpole was in office from 1721 to 1742 as Prime Minister, or principal minister, and this was due to many reasons. One of the important reasons was royal support, but there were other reasons such as his ability to manage parliament and the success of his policies. Walpole was very clever and ensured that the country was stable and this was very popular with the powerful people in England as it allowed them to increase their wealth and so they supported him.

At first George I was not keen on Walpole as he was suspicious of his friendship with both the Prince of Wales and Queen Caroline. However, Walpole won over the trust of the king through his cover up of the South Sea Bubble scandal and by foiling the supposed Atterbury plot in 1722. These events helped Walpole to win the trust of George I and as he was already friendly with the future George II it was much easier for him when he became king. Walpole was aware that to remain in office he needed the support of the king as the king was able to choose his ministers. In order to keep royal support Walpole ensured that the court's financial needs were met, by persuading and managing parliament to grant enough money. He also made sure that he did not pursue policies which would annoy the king, thus he avoided any policies that might threaten Hanover and, because George II was interested in the army, avoided making any appointment of officers. Walpole was also able to get the size of the Civil List increased when George II came to the throne and this won him support with the king.

Walpole was also careful to ensure that he controlled the king as much as possible. He did this in a number of ways. He tried to control access to the king so that only his views were heard. He also made friendships at court, particularly the mistresses of the king, so that they could influence the king. Walpole was also careful to keep the king informed of decisions and when the king went back to Hanover a trusted supporter of Walpole went with him.

Although the king appointed his ministers, and therefore had a choice, it was important that the ministers who he appointed were able to manage parliament. Walpole was able to do this in a number of ways. He was careful to build up a court party in parliament, whose support he could count on. He did this through a number of methods, including bribery, patronage and appointments. Through this he had between 100 and 180 MPs on his payroll. The patronage also allowed him to influence elections and many seats were controlled by the Treasury and Admiralty, whilst others were controlled by his political allies, such as Devonshire. This allowed him to build up considerable support in the House of Commons. The number of MPs who he did control was never a majority of the 558 and therefore he also had to persuade others to support him. Many of the MPs were 'Country MPs who did not want rewards, but Walpole listened to their views and explained his policies to them, which often won them over. He was also very skillful in controlling the Commons. When he disagreed with matters he was often able to delay debates or drag them out so that MPs went home. His control was also helped by his close relationship with the Speaker. During Walpole's time in office both Speakers held crown appointments and were therefore unlikely to be completely independent.

Walpole was also politically skillful and realised the importance of being in the Commons, hence he turned down a peerage so that he could remain in the Commons. He was also willing to abandon unpopular measures, such as punishing Edinburgh for the Porteous Riots of 1737 and the Excise Scheme in 1733. On the other hand, he also pleased many Whigs who were non-conformists by the annual Indemnity Act, which freed individual dissenters from dismissal for their failure to take Anglican communion.

Many of Walpole's policies were popular, not just with the monarch, but also MPs and the country. He promoted commerce, which helped to make the country more prosperous and by keeping Britain at peace he ensured that the country was not heavily taxed and that trade and commerce could develop. These popular policies meant that there was little challenge to him. However, he did become unpopular over his unwillingness to go to war in the late 1730s and then over the Austrian Succession in the 1740s. In the end he was forced, reluctantly to go to war and it was the conduct

of that war that forced him to resign in 1742. Policies were therefore important in keeping him in power and when they were not popular he lost support.

There were therefore many reasons why he remained in power, support of the monarch was an important reason. However, another important reason was his ability to control parliament. His popular policies were also important and therefore these three reasons were the most important.

Examiner commentary

- The answer does offer a list of reasons why Walpole was able to stay in power for so long, but the relative importance of the factors is asserted not explained. There is a hint of judgement over his fall due to his policies, but this line of argument is not really developed. There is support for most of the points that are made, although in places some more precise examples would be helpful. There are also some sections which tend to be slightly descriptive. Despite this, there is sufficient explanation of the reasons to reach Level 4.

Y110 From Pitt to Peel: Britain 1783-1853

How successful were the Younger Pitt's domestic policies?

High level answer

When Pitt came into office in he faced a number of problems. There had been calls for financial reform and the American war had left England with a big national debt. His supporters in the county seats wanted measures to tackle corruption and waste. He needed to keep the support of the King as well as to be seen to be offering efficient sound government and after 1789 he had to deal with the problems that arose from the spread of revolutionary ideas and from 1793 the war with revolutionary France. His peacetime policies had limitations but they did achieve many of their aims and increased his reputation and allowed him to remain in office. It could be argued that he became less successful as fear of revolution and problems of war blocked reform and led him to over-react to the radical threat at home and rely on repression too much. Also the war undid many of the financial reforms which he achieved in peace time.

Pitt's financial policies have been described as 'the cornerstone of his success'. The American war had led to a debt of £242 million. This could be reduced by either cutting expenditure or raising new taxes. Pitt achieved success in both. He improved the efficiency of tax collecting. Much depended on reducing the evasion of taxes on trade so taxes on imports such as tea were reduced to make smuggling less profitable and measures were taken to reduce the widespread smuggling problem such as the Hovering Act allowing suspected smuggling vessels to be searched up to 12 miles from the coast. Thus revenue was increased while prices for some imports fell, increasing purchasing power and encouraging trade. Net income from duties was almost 50% higher in 1792 than 1783 and represented a considerable success. This area achieved more than other attempts to raise money.

Pitt also diversified the tax system spreading the burden on the rich as well as the poor who were more hit by import duty. There were taxes on luxuries such as racehorses, wigs and even the servants employed by rich bachelors. A window tax affected those with larger houses. The system of collection also improved meaning that in some cases tax collection doubled. This was successful in that it brought some new ideas to taxation and avoided the burden falling on the lower classes and thus raising labour costs and causing discontent. However, there were limits. When Pitt tried to tax shops – something which was genuinely original and would have brought in more than the other taxes, it was opposed in London and caused so much disturbance that it was abandoned.

Pitt also revived the idea of the Sinking Fund – a special fund set aside to pay off the national debt which had been reduced by £10 by 1793. The idea was not new and an oddity was that it was continued when Britain went to war. This meant that loans had to be taken out to pay off the existing loans, often at a higher rate than the interest on the existing debt. The Sinking Fund represented a concern with financial stability that could not survive the expenses of wartime and it was abandoned in 1820.

Linked to the need for more revenue was the need to reduce corruption and waste and to mitigate the effects of excessive patronage and the awarding of gifts, sinecures and pensions for political purposes. Pitt did make some progress to a cause dear to the hearts of the independent MPs who had been supporters of Wyvil's County Association and opposed 'the old corruption', but despite greater government control of key offices like the Excise Board, Pitt had more limited success here and patronage, though reduced, remained a feature of public life well into the next century. Pitt did not act on the advice of the Public Accounts committee to reduce large numbers of sinecures and preferred to wait until the office holders died and then not to replace them.

In economic policy, Pitt was anxious to base increased revenue on increased trade and to take advantage of Britain's economic progress in the period in terms of an increase in manufacturing and also in her strong foreign trade. He was aware of the latest economic theories, especially those of Adam Smith, and put them into practice with the Eden Treaty with France. This gave greater opportunities to British manufacturers who produced a wider range of export goods than it did to France which was more reliant on items such as exported wine.

Pitt believed in rational and efficient reforms and was ready to tackle vested interests, but only up to a point.

His measure to reform parliament ran into the objection that the seats controlled by borough patrons were property and that parliament should not interfere with lawfully-held private property. Pitt dropped the Bill and did not attempt any large scale reform of British institutions again. The same objection prevented a large-scale reform of patronage, so his attempts at greater fairness and efficiencies were flawed. Pitt believed in the Church and the Crown and came to see the new principles of popular government arising from the French revolution as dangerous extremism to be crushed. As expressions of support for French ideas emerged, even on a limited scale in Britain, Pitt responded with harsh legislation, suspending habeas corpus 1794-5 and 1798-1801 and passing acts in 1795 against 'seditious meetings' and allowing the government to arrest radicals for treason. He also devoted resources to pro-government and anti-Revolutionary propaganda. The state legislated against 'combinations' in 1799, lumping early trade unions in with revolutionaries and radicals dangerous to the established order. As unions were not much of a threat this simply seemed like class legislation. The only real manifestation of unrest that was threatening was the naval mutinies of 1797 and the discontented sailors did not establish links with the various disconnected radical groups and individuals, so the government probably over reacted to the threat and introduced repressive and unnecessary measures which have blighted Pitt's reputation for good judgement.

On the other hand, Britain did not suffer revolution and its governing classes continued to dominate, so in that sense Pitt was successful. His financial policies allowed for some naval expansion before 1793 which put Britain in a good position to fight a prolonged war against revolutionary and Napoleonic France. He financed that war by an innovative income tax and from the surpluses which derived from his sound financial policies in years of good trade. Britain enjoyed strong credit and could raise loans to sustain a war which required heavy subsidy of overseas allies. So judged by the standards of maintaining and defending the status quo, Pitt achieved success. Judged by the standards of reforming Britain and creating a more modern society, he achieved less. The old corruption was still present; parliament remained under the control of a small number of patrons and the government with a limited number of voters and open bribery. Some of his financial ideas were innovative and achieved their end, but the Sinking Fund was really made redundant with the onset of war in 1793 and was carried on too long. The judgement that Pitt 'bridged the political world of the 18th and 19th century is fair, but for all his changes, his strong moral stance against waste and his belief in reform, he was rooted in the eighteenth century and had little grasp of the new ideas which he repressed.

Examiner commentary

- This deals with domestic policy and even when foreign issues are mentioned, they relate to domestic policy.
- The essay deals with the whole of Pitt's ministry and not just the peacetime period
- There could be a lot more on aspects of the policies, but it goes beyond finance and is reasonably balanced with the successes being qualified.
- The writing is generally analytical and not descriptive and there is some attempt to establish criteria for assessing success.

Medium level answer

Pitt faced a lot of problems with the heavy debts incurred by the American War and the national decline. He did a lot to deal with those problems and was well known as a good financial expert who found new ways to collect taxes and new ways to ensure that there was more efficiency in the financial system. He also tried to pass other reforms. He saw the need to protect England from France and made sure that the government kept control of the country after war began. Pitt was very successful and though he was laughed at when he became prime minister at the age of 24 he soon was compared with his famous father as he was seen 'not as a chip off the old block but the block itself' and won the respect of the King and his party.

He did a lot to improve the finance of the country. A lot of money was being lost by smuggling so he reduced some duties to make goods cheap so there was less profit. He sent out more excise men to stop smuggling and the navy hovered round the costs to stop smugglers.

He also did a lot to increase taxes and cut the deficit which had risen because of the war against America. He was very ingenious and raised taxes on lots of things which had not been taxed before like racehorses, whigs, (sic) windows and luxuries. This meant that he did not have to tax goods which were imported like tea and brandy so heavily so that smuggling was less profitable.

It also meant that the rich were taxed, which was successful as it seemed fair to the people, though they did have to pay tax on candles. Pitt also cut down on corruption in tax collecting so that the government could have a surplus.

He also set up for the first time a Sinking Fund, which was an important new idea in which money was set aside each year to pay off the debt. As there was a lot of money which had to be paid in interest to those who had lent to the government, the more the debt went down, the more money was available for the government. This was very successful and made Pitt popular.

Pitt also believed in good, fair government and reduced the sinecures that some people had. These were jobs where they had to do nothing but still were paid a salary. He also tried to reform parliament in 1785. This was very necessary as there a lot of rotten boroughs where only a small number of people, lived and these people were often bribed by important men to get their MPs into parliament.

Pitt had succeeded in reducing the debt improving government and raising the issues of reform but he became worried that revolution would spread from France. At first he thought the revolution was a good thing, but as it became more extreme he turned against it. He wanted to defend Britain from revolution. In 1793 Britain went to war against France as it was disgusted by the execution of the king. Pitt had to raise more money and had to introduce an income tax in 1797 for the first time, though it was abolished after the war. Only the richer people paid. He also raised a lot of loans to fight the war. However his main success was in passing laws to stop revolution and he suspended the right of people to have a trial if they were arrested for plotting against the government by suspending Habeus Corpus (sic) and also passed two acts introducing censorship and allowing the government to arrest suspects. He also passed a law linking England to Ireland in 1800 after a rising there. Some of these laws were unpopular but Britain did not have a revolution so Pitt was successful.

Pitt did not suffer from very good health and had to drink a lot to ease the pain. He was very formal and did not have close friends, but he had very clear ideas of what Britain needed and made major changes in finance which helped him get the support of the King and the Tory MPs who wanted less corrupt government. When war started he was not a very strong war leader like Churchill later on but he raised money for war and made some good speeches and stopped revolution from spreading by passing strict laws to control meetings and revolutionary pamphlets. He was successful and achieved a lot for his party.

Examiner commentary

- Not always detailed or accurate, this nevertheless offers a clear argument focused on success.
- There is little evaluation and the answer demonstrates and explains a point of view rather than discussing any alternatives or attempting to qualify any of the successes. The one reference to not being a strong war leader is not explained or developed.
- The candidate has answered the question, has shown some knowledge of some aspects and has dealt with Pitt's premiership as a whole.
- There is some reliance on assertion rather than supported argument and points are not well developed, but the focus on the question is sustained.

Y111 Liberals, Conservatives and the Rise of Labour 1846-1918

How successful was Gladstone's First Ministry?

High level answer

Gladstone's priority was 'to pacify Ireland' when he became prime minister in 1868, but the Liberal party he led also wanted to introduce a number of reforms which seemed pressing at the time and had not been possible while Palmerston still led the party. Their inspiration was the development of Gladstonian Liberalism and the ideas of 'peace, retrenchment and reform'. Many of the changes made from 1868 to 1874 did deliver Liberal ideas and there some important changes, but not all of the policies followed were successful and too often the need for economy took priority over developing reforms which might have been more far-reaching and significant.

For Gladstone, Ireland was a priority and his approach was to benefit the mass of the Irish people by land reform, disestablishment of the Anglican Church in Ireland and reforming higher education. The Irish Land Act of 1870 did extend Ulster tenant right to the whole of Ireland and was successful in beginning to recognize the need to compensate tenants for improvements, help to prevent evictions – which would now only be for non-payment of rent without compensation and to encourage more independent landowning. However, few tenants could afford to buy their own land even with cheap loans from the state. Also, it was difficult to establish compensation in the courts and when in the later 1870s there was an agricultural depression, more and more tenants could not afford rents and suffered eviction. There were some improvements, but the act fell short of the demands for the three Fs, fixity of tenure, free sale of leases and fair rents that reformers were demanding. The number of tenants who had been able to make substantial improvements were not extensive and the key element was investment in land to avoid low yields, an issue not tackled. Similarly, the Irish Church Disestablishment Act of 1869 had mixed results. It did end a grievance of the majority of Irish people not belonging to the official church, but the large-scale removal of the wealth of the church for the benefit of the Irish people did not occur. Most of the resources and wealth were given to the new, independent Church of Ireland, which remained richly endowed with land. The proposal to create new universities which would be non denominational met with hostility from both Catholics and Protestants and was defeated in 1873. Ireland was not pacified as the government had to rely on coercion bills and the years after 1874 saw the emergence of a political party devoted to greater independence, the Home Rule Party, and also when depression hit in the late 1870s a radical peasant organization, the Land League. Gladstone had to return to Ireland after 1880 so had only been partially successful in his aim.

The government saw a considerable amount of activity to reduce privilege and increase opportunity, one of the key areas of Liberal belief, though one pursued more by the party than by Gladstone himself. The army was reformed and commissions could no longer be bought. The Civil Service was also reformed and competitive examination replaced patronage as the basis of recruitment and promotion. Both these measures showed a belief in promotion by merit and dealt with issues raised by the Crimean war and by previous reports such as the Northcote Trevelyan report so were long overdue. However, the civil service reforms stopped short of changing the foreign office and as examinations really needed a public school education only open to the richer members of society, the upper class domination was reduced and not ended. Indeed, patronage had been a way for some able young people to enter the civil service and this was now closed. The lower classes did not have the educational opportunities to be able to compete. The Education Act of 1870 was only for elementary education and only set up new state schools where no existing church schools were available. The act was successful in establishing a lot more schools and responding to the needs of a wider electorate. It laid the basis for later free and compulsory education, but did not provide it. It set up new school boards which became an important elected part of local government, but it did not meet the demands of many Liberal nonconformists for secular education for all, as in many areas nonconformist children had to go to Anglican schools. Compared with the limited provision before, Forster's act of 1870 was successful; but the desire to save money came before the desire to establish a new education system and the old system was simply added to. Politically, the measure was unsuccessful as it caused splits and resentment in the Liberal party.

The major constitutional reform was the secret ballot of 1872 which did recognize the importance of the enlarged electorate created in 1867 to be able to vote without pressure, and was a major democratic advance.

However, there was no extension of the electorate until 1884 to 1885 and still relatively few voted and of course no women. Gladstone may have been 'the people's William' but did not believe in offering the people direct help. The Public Health Act of 1870- did lead to some improvements, but there were fewer public health measures to improve living standards than under Disraeli from 1874-80. Gladstone still strongly believed in the moral importance of the working classes helping themselves and also in not interfering in contracts between employers and employees. Trade Unions were helped by being given legal recognition and being allowed to sue in courts and to protect their funds, but when it came to effectively supporting changes in wages and conditions by striking, the government offered less and the Criminal Law Amendment Act made picketing illegal.

Reform was often made less effective by the belief in individualism and the desire to keep taxes and spending low. The belief in Peace was pursued in foreign policy and Britain did not become involved in wars in Europe which saw the growth of a new Germany. The government was successful in ensuring that Belgian neutrality was affected but played no part in the considerable change which resulted from the defeat of France by Prussia and the creation of a German Empire which included lands taken from France. Gladstone was also unable to prevent Russia from using the disruption of war to renounce treaties preventing her from naval expansion in the Black Sea. Further weakness was seen in Britain accepting compensation to the USA for losses of Union shipping during the Civil War by a British made warship the Alabama. Disraeli made great play of Gladstone's weak defence of British interests, but the Alabama award was in line with Liberal ideas of maintaining peace and accepting international arbitration and the government could do little against either Prussia or Russia with a small army and no allies. Criticism of foreign policy are unconvincing.

The attempts to reform and modernize Britain had exhausted the government by 1874 and some were unpopular, for example the licensing Act and the Irish universities Bill. Some did not really go far enough to meet their aims. However some did show that the government was tackling matters which had been long overdue for reform and did lead to later changes. Many were in keeping with Gladstone's ideology and showed determination and energy. There were real achievements in terms of what Liberalism set out to do, but there were substantial limitations in the scope of the benefits brought to the people as a whole.

Examiner commentary

- This sets out criteria for success and relates the analysis to that, rather than simply describing some successes and failures. There is a balanced judgement, even if Ireland gets rather a lot of attention, with a consistent attempt to assess and offer judgements. There is some good knowledge which is used and not simply imparted for its own sake. The conclusion offers a good sense of assessment of success and the essay is fairly wide-ranging.

Medium level answer

There were many successes in Gladstone's first ministry, but some failures, too but overall there was a lot of achievement and many important reforms were made.

Gladstone saw the need for more education as there were not schools available in many areas. Britain was seen to be lagging behind other countries like Germany and there was a national league set up to promote more education. The Education Act introduced new school boards who could build new schools where there was no existing school run by voluntary bodies like the churches. This led to a lot more schools being built and more boys and girls getting elementary education. There was a lot controversy about religion in school and some like Joseph Chamberlain, a nonconformist did want nonconformist children to have to go to church schools and was angry because there were not always new state schools built where there was a church of England school. Later on there were more changes but this was an important development and helped many boys and girls.

Another success was the Secret ballot Act which gave people the right to vote in secret and not in the open as was the case before where their employers or landlords could see the way they voted and sack or evict them if they disagreed, It also cut down bribery and so was successful as it made the voting system more like the modern one and was necessary with a bigger number of people who could vote.

Another success was the change made in the army by Cardwell who abolished the practice of officers buying commissions and also abolished flogging in the army and reduced the amount of time men served.

This was fairer and made conditions better for the soldiers. The civil service was also changed for the better as people could not get jobs just by the influence of upper class people but had to sit public examinations. This was a very liberal measure as it believed in fairness and reduced privilege.

Another success was the Irish Land Act, which gave help to Irish tenants who got compensation for any improvements made to their land. This was common in Ulster but the act extended it to Ireland as a whole, which helped the Irish and seemed fair. Gladstone thought it was important to help Ireland after the bombings in London. He also tried to help Ireland by improving higher education and he was successful in his Irish Church Disestablishment Act which made the Irish church no longer the official religion as it pleased the majority of Irish people who were Catholics.

Gladstone was successful in his foreign policy as he avoided getting involved in wars in Europe and he showed that he was moral and believed in international law by accepting the Alabama award and paid over £3 million to the USA because a British ship had sunk some American ships (sic). Gladstone believed in peace so was successful in his foreign policy.

Gladstone was also quite unsuccessful in his policy. He did not help the working class because though he made Trade Unions legal he did not allow strikers to use picketing because he did not like force. This made him unpopular.

Another thing he did to make him unpopular was the Licensing Act which cut down the number of pubs. This was thought to be bad for trade and led people to vote against him in 1874 when he said 'he was born down in a torrent of gin and beer'.

The Education Act failed, too, because it did not please the Nonconformists who did not support Gladstone so much so he lost the 1874 election. By then Disraeli was offering more social reform and imperialism so Gladstone was unsuccessful in keeping power.

Gladstone had some successes and some failures but his successes were more important because they changed education, reformed the army and civil service and kept peace. So I think that he was successful.

Examiner commentary

- The answer has offered some explanation of successes and some failures, but drifts into reasons for the 1874 election. There is some reasonable knowledge of some of the measures. The question is addressed and a view offered based on the reasons given. However there is very little attempt to weigh the reforms or to establish any criteria for success. The issue is seen very much in black and white terms – this was successful or this was unsuccessful, rather than exercising any high level judgements. The list like approach is typical of answers at C level, as is the somewhat uneven explanation and depth.

Y112 Britain 1900-1951

Assess the reasons why the first Labour government was short-lived

High level answer

The first Labour government which took office in 1924 was a minority government, dependent on Liberal support. Thus it was weak from the outset as no agreement had been made for a genuine coalition, despite the fact that some Liberals were members of the government. The Liberals were free to bring down the government at any time. As well as this, the problems that the government faced were difficult and some of the decisions made played into the hands of its opponents. However, given the success of some of the policies, the most significant reason was the basic position of being a minority government.

The election of December 1923 gave the Tories the most seats at 258 but the opposition vote was divided between Labour with 191 and the Liberals with 158. The Liberals were reunited after the Asquith-Lloyd George split and supported Labour rather than the Conservatives mainly because of the issue of free trade, rather than having agreement on the socialist constitution that Labour had drawn up in 1918. Thus the agreement was fragile rather than being based on deep principles. The Liberals had not given up hope of becoming the party of government, so it was not just a case of a minority party supporting the opposition to gain experience of power. Also some Liberals were unhappy about supporting 'socialism'. Thus MacDonald's government did not have a firm basis and could be overturned at any time by the Liberals. However skillful MacDonald had been, it is not very likely that he could have governed for long on this basis.

In addition to this underlying problem were the difficulties the prime minister faced in dealing with splits in his party between right and left. MacDonald had to be sure not to appear to be an extremist, as a Labour government was a considerable novelty at the time and the Conservatives would make great play of anything that seemed to be too left wing. Thus, the government contained only a few radicals like John Wheatley. The trade unions were only represented by five ministers. Thus the failure of the government cannot be blamed on MacDonald's lack of caution in forming his government. However, there were limits to the amount of concessions that MacDonald was prepared to make. Wheatley's housing act increased spending on council houses, some cuts, for example in education, were restored and there were increased benefits for the unemployed. All of these were disliked by the Liberals, as was the recognition of Communist Russia for the first time. However, had MacDonald not introduced some left wing policies he would not have maintained the support of his own party. Until August he maintained a balance, but the Campbell Case proved to be crucial and was a major cause of the government's failure.

JR Campbell was a veteran socialist who edited the 'Worker's Weekly'. When the magazine published a letter urging soldiers not to act against strikers, Campbell was prosecuted under an act of 1797 against 'sedition'. MacDonald had to act to stop an outcry in the Labour movement but the withdrawal of the prosecution led to another outcry, this time among Conservatives and Liberals. The matter was allowed to get out of hand and MacDonald made it a vote of confidence in the government. This may have been as a result of his inexperience as a national leader but the decision marked the end of the government as they were defeated 398-198. The raising of the matter to a vote of no confidence made it inevitable that MacDonald resigned. Thus the Campbell case brought together a number of factors. MacDonald was frustrated by internal criticisms that he was failing socialism and by Liberal criticisms that he was going too far. He and his ministers had only limited experience of government and in handling 'coalition politics' and the Liberals had decided that they must defend Britain against socialism and vote with the Tories. In the end, though it was MacDonald who was most responsible for the situation by taking the matter to a vote.

By October the Conservatives were happy to bring down the government and this was a major factor. They had abandoned the policy of free trade as being too unpopular. This took away a major element in Liberal appeal to the voters. They also made it clear that they would not reject social reforms. Baldwin calculated that those voters who were unhappy about the threat from communism and militant trade unions would swing to them and not the Liberals. This was proved right in the election which saw a catastrophic Liberal decline.

Thus the fall of the government depended a lot on the willingness of the Conservatives to choose their moment in bringing down the government and the miscalculation of the Liberals in thinking that they would be popular because they had stood up against left wing extremism. Though MacDonald had given them the opportunity, it was probably only a matter of time before the opposition joined together.

MacDonald faced great difficulties because it was such a novelty to see Labour in office and even the ministers could hardly believe that they were actually now ruling the country. The Russian revolution was still fresh in people's minds and the high levels of industrial unrest that was to culminate in the 1926 General Strike worried middle class voters. Even though the government had done little that was socialist, had opposed strikes and focused on traditional free trade economic policies, there was an underlying unease that provided the background to the decision of the opposition to bring down the government. Without that, Labour might well have been able to last longer. However, the minority status of the government must remain the most important reason. Had the government lasted longer than the idea of Labour being the main alternative to the Conservatives would have been even more firmly established and the Liberals could not have afforded that. It was easy for the Conservatives to play on Liberal fears, especially as the abandonment of free trade made it likely that the Conservatives would pick up millions of Liberal votes in an election, but only the precarious position of Labour made it possible for its enemies to bring it down.

Examiner commentary

- This is an analytical rather than a descriptive answer. It considers different factors but it goes some way beyond listing them and does offer assessment. It links different causes and offers a view about which offers the most important explanation. It sets out its underlying argument clearly at the start and defends it. Given the limited scope of the topic – a few months in 1924 – detailed support is needed and offered.

Medium level answer

There are many reasons why the Labour government of 1924 was short lived and did not survive through the year. The government was a minority government. The ministers did not have much experience of ruling the country. The Labour party was split with some wanting more left wing policies. The Liberals were frightened of communism and voted against the government. The main cause of the fall was the Campbell case and the Zinoviev letter helped to make sure that Labour was not reelected.

The first reason is that Labour did not get an outright majority in the 1923 election and gained only 191 seats. This meant that they did not gain as many as the Tories who got over 250 and so the Liberals who got 158 could hold the balance of power. If they had decided to support the Tories then Baldwin would have remained prime minister, but they decided to support Labour which was a very bad decision for them in the end. However it meant that when they wanted they could vote against MacDonald, so Labour was not secure. In the end the Liberals voted against them and so brought them down, explaining why the government was short-lived.

Another reason was that the government was inexperienced and MacDonald had not been in government before and nor had many of his ministers. This made them unsure of what they could do and so the government did not have a strong record in making reforms, though they did increase the number of council houses and make some other reforms like setting up a committee on education and increasing welfare benefits. If they had been more experienced they might have done more and so the Liberals might not have voted against them. They were more successful in foreign policy and MacDonald drew up the Geneva Protocol at the League of Nations as he was an idealist and wanted to prevent war as he had opposed the First World War. He also recognised Soviet Russia because he wanted a more peaceful world. However foreign affairs were not as popular at home and so he did not get much credit and was voted out by the Conservatives and the Liberals.

Another reason was because his government was split as there were moderates like Philip Snowden and more extreme Labour MPs like the ones from Red Clydeside and some Labour supporters wanted more socialist measures, but MacDonald knew that he had to be careful because of the Liberals. This caused a lot of tension, especially when the government used emergency powers against strikers and helped to weaken the government.

This is shown in the Campbell case when an editor was charged with treason because of an article (sic) urging soldiers not to act against strikers.

When he was prosecuted under an outdated act, the government made a mess of things and dropped the charges. This made it seem as MacDonald were being controlled by the left wing and upset the Liberals who voted against him and brought the government down.

Another reason is that people were frightened that Labour might be too communist after the Russian Revolution and the strikes after World War I so were happy when the Liberals voted them out. The Zinoviev Letter made it seem that Labour were communists and so Labour lost the election. This is the main reason as it made it hard for Labour to continue.

Examiner commentary

- This answer does offer some explanations, even if it veers away from the question sometimes. It has some detail, for example the election figures and knows some of the policies. The argument is not always well made, but it avoids description. The approach is to list factors rather than to see much connection between them, so there is limited response to the command word 'assess' and it is if the question had said 'Give some reasons!'. A very limited attempt is made to make a judgement about the relative importance of the reasons at the very end.

Y113 Britain 1930-1997

'The most important reason for Conservative political domination 1979-1997 was the weakness of Labour.' How far do you agree?

High level answer

Labour weakness was apparent for much of the period. Thatcher had come to power in 1979 because many voters thought that Labour had failed to control the trade unions during the 'winter of discontent' and had allowed Britain to decline. Divisions in the party prevented them from responding effectively in subsequent elections and they suffered from some weaknesses in leadership. However, the Conservatives under Thatcher did have considerable appeal. Leadership seemed stronger and many policies were popular. The country was undergoing a period of social change which helped the Conservatives and the Falklands Factor was important in rallying support to Thatcher. Labour did recover with the establishment of more control over more radical elements in the party and with a declining belief in Thatcher. However John Major managed to offer change and Labour had to wait for Tony Blair to offer significantly distinctive policies and leadership style to gain power. Though the factors were linked, the main factor was the weakness of Labour because there were many criticisms of the Conservatives but Labour could not exploit them effectively enough to take power.

The major weakness of Labour in opposition was its failure to remain united. The split between Labour and the SDP Alliance was to prove damaging in the election of 1983. Leading respected members of Labour's leadership, Roy Jenkins, Shirley William, David Owen and Bill Rodgers were disillusioned with Labour's move to the left. The SDP gained 11.6% of the vote in 1983 taking 3.5 million votes from Labour. At a time when the Conservatives were very united behind a dynamic leader, Labour seemed very divided. However this factor must not be exaggerated. It would not have occurred without Labour choosing an unsuitable leader and moving too far from what many voters wanted. The total SDP and Labour votes did not exceed those cast for Thatcher and they only won 6 seats. The split was more damaging in 1987 when Labour and SDP votes did exceed the votes for the Conservatives.

The 1979 result had left to a shift to the left in Labour signified by the election of the veteran radical Michael Foot to be leader in November 1980. The Labour election manifesto in 1983 appealed to traditional Labour voters much more than to the electorate as a whole and it has been described as 'the longest suicide note in history'. Foot for all his intellectual ability was ineffective on television. His policies of nuclear disarmament, industry nationalization and government economic planning and control seemed to be old fashioned. The Conservatives made effective play of these elements, but they can be exaggerated. By 1983 Thatcher's policies were controversial and she had come in for a lot of criticisms as unemployment rose. What maintained her support in 1983 may have been more the popularity of the victory over Argentina in the Falklands War.

This element was not present in 1987, though when the Conservatives won slightly more votes, though slightly fewer seats. Labour no longer represented outdated policies and under Neil Kinnock's leadership had rejected their militant wing. Kinnock was no match for Thatcher in debate and was inclined to be long-winded in debate. However the long term effects of Labour's split were still being felt even though the SDP gained rather less support.

Labour's leadership decisions, its association with traditional socialist ideas which seemed out of keeping with the developments of the 1980s, its reputation as allowing trade unions to get out of control in the 1970s and the concerns about the trade union violence seen in the miners' strike may have contributed to its long period out of office. However, the other factors were the positive appeal of the Conservatives.

Thatcher made a distinctive appeal with her conviction politics and clear policies. She showed considerable determination in pursuing policies and offered an end to consensus politics which had seemed to lead to Britain suffering from inefficient industry, inflation and lower growth rates. Though this made little impact in industrial heartlands in the Midlands, the South and London it had considerable appeal. She made effective use of incidents such as the Falklands War and the Miners Strike to reinforce the view of an 'iron Lady' which was in contrast to less striking Labour leaders. Even after her fall in 1990, leadership was still important as John Major offered a more sympathetic leadership style while being able to take advantage of economic success. Voters could have the essence of Thatcherism without Thatcher who had become increasingly abrasive.

The importance of the leaders' television image had become important, but this can be exaggerated as a factor. The rise in unemployment, the shift to indirect taxation, signs of urban decline and poverty were making the government unpopular despite Thatcher's commitment and strength. If Labour had been able to capitalize on these problems more and had it remained united, then even the 'Falklands Factor' might not have been as effective, especially as the war had not been a party issue. Also by 1987 even with more obvious signs of economic prosperity and the creation of a vested interest in the country through the sale of shares in nationalized industries and council houses, Thatcher still divided opinion. However with the split in Labour and a failure to offer a credible alternative policy and the difficulty of reversing the changes made by the Conservatives, it was difficult for Labour to gain the key marginal seats that would have swung the election. When that did happen it was under a different type of leader – Tony Blair in 1997 with a clearer vision – New Labour, stronger policies and a more divided Conservative policy.

Thatcher had been a major world leader; she had led a successful war over the Falklands, reduced inflation, rescued the power of the unions, taken responsibility for economic growth and maintained a strong personal image of strength. It may be that these positive qualities more than Labour weaknesses best explain the long period of Conservative domination. They may have been enough to ensure that Major at least got a victory, even with a reduced majority. The changing society of the 1980s and the collapse of the Liberal vote in the period, which benefited the Conservatives were also factors. However the key reason remains the weakness of Labour. Moving to the left meant that they could not take advantage of Liberal decline. It also meant that the new middle classes outside Labour's industrial heartland did not swing to Labour. The division of the Labour vote ensured that even when Thatcher became less popular, Labour could not take advantage of it and the failure to develop leaders whose style and image were persuasive enough to overcome the vivid personalities of the Thatcher era was also important. By 1992 Labour had done much to recover but it took a more radical change in leadership, style and policy for them to win in 1997.

Examiner commentary

- This is clearly focused on the question and deals with some Labour weaknesses as well as considering alternative explanations.
- There is a lot of judgement and the essay established links between factors and also quite a strong overall judgement which is defended and not merely stated.
- The answer does have some supporting evidenced which is detailed, but obviously bin such a long period cannot deal with every aspect. The conclusion offers a strong view.
- The judgements may not be totally supported and with such a controversial topic, the view may not be one that all would agree with, but the answer has engaged fully with the question and shown consistent argument and analysis.

Medium level answer

The Conservatives were in power from 1979 when Thatcher won the election to 1997 when Blair won the election. There are many reasons for this and some are linked to Labour weakness and some are linked to other factors like Conservative strengths.

Labour elected Michael Foot as leader after the defeat of 1979 meant that Callaghan stepped down. Foot was not a strong leader and did not offer a good image, as he looked old fashioned in his duffle coat and long hair. He also was quite left wing, which many of the voters did not appreciate. The Labour manifesto included policies which were only popular with their own supporters like nationalization of industry. Labour lost the election of 1983 even though Mrs. Thatcher had caused many problems with closing down industries.

Another reason why Labour lost elections was because a group of leading Labour supporters left the party and formed the SDP and this group later joined with the Liberals to form the Lib Dems but in 1983 and 1987 they fought the Liberals as well, so there were three parties against the Conservatives, the Labour Party, the Liberals and the SDP which weakened the Labour Party and let the conservatives win as the other parties split the left-wing vote. The Labour party was too divided to win and even when Neil Kinnock defeated the left and made it clear that he would be supporting more moderate policies it was too late and he was defeated. He did not help because he was often very bombastic in his speeches and did not argue effectively against Thatcher and Major, but he was more modern than Michael Foot.

Labour was unlucky in that John Smith, a moderate leader who might have won died.

Changes in Britain did not always help Labour. The older industrial areas suffered badly from unemployment and many inner city areas showed signs of poverty. However, there was economic growth in other areas and this helped the Conservatives who were encouraging the financial sector and new enterprises. Many wanted to buy council houses and liked Thatcher's policies which encouraged them to do this.

Other factors were the Falklands War. This war against Argentina was very popular with many in Britain and even the working class voters admired Thatcher's victory over Argentina. The Sun newspaper was very patriotic and Thatcher seemed to be very brave in defending Britain's interests. Her friendship with President Reagan meant that she got a lot of credit for ending the cold war and standing up to Russia and Communism. She made Britain very important internationally while standing up to Europe and this made her popular.

Thatcher had a strong image and said 'the Lady's not for Turning'. She seemed strong against the 'wets' in her cabinet and was not afraid of following through policies even if they were unpopular and brought down inflation which had been a major concern. She also stood up to the trade unions which many people liked, through the violence of the miners' strike of 1984-5 was shocking. Any voters did see the flying pickets and Arthur Scargill as too extreme.

Thatcher did seem to be modernizing Britain and that helped her to win elections. She reduced the power of unions to have restrictive practices and to go on strike without balloting their members. She denationalized key industries and allowed ordinary people to buy shares in them. Many nationalized industries were thought to be old fashioned like the railways and to need investment. The government also insisted on higher standards for example by introducing the national curriculum in schools. The government used new ideas to run the economy like monetarism in place of older ideas which had not seemed to work well. These policies were often controversial but seemed to show that the government was working to a plan and won them support.

By 1990 the Conservatives were becoming less united and this led to them losing support, but even after Thatcher had been forced out, John Major won the election because he seemed to offer much less extreme policies and leadership while building on the reputation that the Conservatives had gained.

Thus there are many reasons why Labour was not in power between 1979 and 1997. Some of them concern Labour policies and leadership. Others are to do with changes in Britain and others are to do with the appeal of Thatcher and the Conservatives. They are all connected but in my opinion, the strength of the Conservatives was most important because they made many changes which people approved of and Thatcher was a strong leader who gained Britain a lot of respect worldwide.

Examiner commentary

- This answers the question and even if the explanations are not always developed, they relate to the issues.
- There are a number of factors here and some knowledge
- There is, however, not attempt to discriminate between the different factors or to connect them and show how they are related.
- The judgement at the end does not follow from any judgements in the essay and comes merely as an assertion.
- The essay does not deal with 'the most important reason' and reads more like an answer to a question "Give some reasons why...!"



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