

**GCE**

**History A**

**Y309/01: Thematic study and historical interpretations: The  
ascendency of the Ottoman Empire 1453-1606**

A Level

**Mark Scheme for June 2024**

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA) is a leading UK awarding body, providing a wide range of qualifications to meet the needs of candidates of all ages and abilities. OCR qualifications include AS/A Levels, Diplomas, GCSEs, Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals, Functional Skills, Key Skills, Entry Level qualifications, NVQs and vocational qualifications in areas such as IT, business, languages, teaching/training, administration and secretarial skills.

It is also responsible for developing new specifications to meet national requirements and the needs of students and teachers. OCR is a not-for-profit organisation; any surplus made is invested back into the establishment to help towards the development of qualifications and support, which keep pace with the changing needs of today's society.

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and students, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which marks were awarded by examiners. It does not indicate the details of the discussions which took place at an examiners' meeting before marking commenced.

All examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and the report on the examination.

© OCR 2024

## MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

### PREPARATION FOR MARKING RM ASSESSOR

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

YOU MUST MARK 5 PRACTICE AND 6 STANDARDISATION RESPONSES BEFORE YOU CAN BE APPROVED TO MARK LIVE SCRIPTS.

### MARKING

1. Mark strictly to the mark scheme.
2. Marks awarded must relate directly to the marking criteria.
3. The schedule of dates is very important. It is essential that you meet the RM Assessor 50% and 100% (traditional 40% Batch 1 and 100% Batch 2) deadlines. If you experience problems, you must contact your Team Leader (Supervisor) without delay.
4. If you are in any doubt about applying the mark scheme, consult your Team Leader by telephone or the RM Assessor messaging system, or by email.
5. **Crossed Out Responses**  
Where a candidate has crossed out a response and provided a clear alternative then the crossed out response is not marked. Where no alternative response has been provided, examiners may give candidates the benefit of the doubt and mark the crossed out response where legible.

### Rubric Error Responses – Optional Questions

Where candidates have a choice of question across a whole paper or a whole section and have provided more answers than required, then all responses are marked and the highest mark allowable within the rubric is given. Enter a mark for each question answered into RM assessor, which will select the highest mark from those awarded. (*The underlying assumption is that the candidate has penalised themselves by attempting more questions than necessary in the time allowed.*)

**Multiple Choice Question Responses**

When a multiple choice question has only a single, correct response and a candidate provides two responses (even if one of these responses is correct), then no mark should be awarded (as it is not possible to determine which was the first response selected by the candidate).

*When a question requires candidates to select more than one option/multiple options, then local marking arrangements need to ensure consistency of approach.*

**Contradictory Responses**

When a candidate provides contradictory responses, then no mark should be awarded, even if one of the answers is correct.

**Short Answer Questions** (requiring only a list by way of a response, usually worth only **one mark per response**)

Where candidates are required to provide a set number of short answer responses then only the set number of responses should be marked. The response space should be marked from left to right on each line and then line by line until the required number of responses have been considered. The remaining responses should not then be marked. Examiners will have to apply judgement as to whether a 'second response' on a line is a development of the 'first response', rather than a separate, discrete response. *(The underlying assumption is that the candidate is attempting to hedge their bets and therefore getting undue benefit rather than engaging with the question and giving the most relevant/correct responses.)*

**Short Answer Questions** (requiring a more developed response, worth **two or more marks**)

If the candidates are required to provide a description of, say, three items or factors and four items or factors are provided, then mark on a similar basis – that is downwards (as it is unlikely in this situation that a candidate will provide more than one response in each section of the response space.)

**Longer Answer Questions** (requiring a developed response)

Where candidates have provided two (or more) responses to a medium or high tariff question which only required a single (developed) response and not crossed out the first response, then only the first response should be marked. Examiners will need to apply professional judgement as to whether the second (or a subsequent) response is a 'new start' or simply a poorly expressed continuation of the first response.

6. Always check the pages (and additional objects if present) at the end of the response in case any answers have been continued there. If the candidate has continued an answer there, then add a tick to confirm that the work has been seen.
7. Award No Response (NR) if:
  - there is nothing written in the answer space

Award Zero '0' if:















- anything is written in the answer space and is not worthy of credit (this includes text and symbols).

Team Leaders must confirm the correct use of the NR button with their markers before live marking commences and should check this when reviewing scripts.

8. The RM Assessor **comments box** is used by your team leader to explain the marking of the practice responses. Please refer to these comments when checking your practice responses. **Do not use the comments box for any other reason.**  
If you have any questions or comments for your team leader, use the phone, the RM Assessor messaging system, or e-mail.
9. Assistant Examiners will send a brief report on the performance of candidates to their Team Leader (Supervisor) via email by the end of the marking period. The report should contain notes on particular strengths displayed as well as common errors or weaknesses. Constructive criticism of the question paper/mark scheme is also appreciated.
10. For answers marked by levels of response:
  - a. **To determine the level** – start at the highest level and work down until you reach the level that matches the answer
  - b. **To determine the mark within the level**, consider the following

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

## 11. Annotations

Annotation	Meaning
	Blank Page
	Highlight
Off-page comment	
	Assertion
	Analysis
	Evaluation
	Explanation
	Factor
	Illustrates/Describes
	Irrelevant, a significant amount of material that does not answer the question
	Judgement
	Knowledge and understanding
	Provenance
	Simple comment
	Unclear
	View

Annotation	Meaning
<b>S</b>	Synthesis
<b>C</b>	Continuity/Change

Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
1			<p><b>Evaluate the Interpretations in both of the two passages.</b></p> <p><b>Explain which you think is more convincing as an explanation of the impact of the fall of Constantinople in 1453.</b></p> <p><b>In locating the Interpretations within the wider historical debate, answers might suggest</b> that Interpretation A argues that the fall of Constantinople was significant in showing the Ottomans were a major power</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>In evaluating Interpretation A, answers might argue</b> that it is correct to suggest the fall was inevitable as the Ottomans were advancing into modern Greece</li> <li>• <b>Answers might argue</b> that the capture was more than symbolic as Constantinople was the capital of the Christian church in the East.</li> <li>• <b>Answers might argue</b> that it provided a valuable base for future advances</li> <li>• <b>Answers might argue</b> the fall was inevitable as under Byzantine Emperors the city had decayed and was largely depopulated</li> <li>• <b>Answers might argue</b> that its capture allowed the Ottomans to dominate the Eastern Mediterranean</li> <li>• <b>Answers might argue</b> that it was a religious threat as the Turks were determined to spread Islam</li> </ul>	30	<p>The indicative content lists features of the period studied that relate to the question set.  <b><u>Neither significance nor relative importance are attributed to the features listed.</u></b></p> <p>The indicative content is intended to reflect the knowledge and understanding a candidate is likely to analyse and evaluate in order to arrive at a judgement in line with the question set.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No set answer is expected.</li> <li>• At Level 5 and above answers will evaluate both interpretations, locating them within the wider historical debate about the issue and using their own knowledge, and reach a balanced judgement as to which they consider the most convincing about the issue in the question.</li> <li>• To be valid, judgements must be supported by relevant and accurate material.</li> <li>• Knowledge must not be credited in isolation, it should only be credited where it is used to analyse and evaluate the interpretations, in line with descriptions in the levels mark scheme.</li> </ul>



Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
			<p><b>In locating the Interpretations within the wider historical debate, answers might suggest</b> that Interpretation B argues that the fall of Constantinople contributed to the development of the Renaissance and encouraged the search for new trade routes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>In evaluating Interpretation B, answers might argue</b> that Byzantine scholars had arrived in Florence in 1397</li> <li>• <b>Answers might argue</b> that Chrysoloras was teaching Greek in Florence before the fall of Constantinople</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the influence of Byzantine styles on Venice</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the development of neo-Platonism and humanism that resulted from the arrival of scholars from Byzantium</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> that Venice acquired Cyprus which helped continue trading</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> that the costs faced by merchants encouraged voyagers to find new trade routes, particularly in the search for spices</li> </ul>		

Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
2*			<p><b>‘The power of the Sultans was at its greatest during the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent (1520-1566).’</b>  <b>How far do you agree?</b></p> <p><b>Answers might consider some of the following themes:</b> expansion and conquest, financial power, characters of the Sultans, the strength of the central political system, reputation</p> <p><b>In supporting the hypothesis in the question,</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>It might be argued</b> that he was a superb warrior and leader</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> that he was able to invade Hungary, capture Belgrade and Rhodes</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> Suleiman’s expansion in Asia</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the introduction of his legal system which made it clear who was ruler and adapted to the needs and customs of different people</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the impression given by the brilliance of his court</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> his development of a civil service</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the development of faction and the disappearance of promotion by merit under later Sultans</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the lack of determination and leadership of Selim II, Murad III and Mehmed III</li> </ul>	25	<p><b>How far do you agree?</b>  The indicative content lists features of the period studied that relate to the question set. Both features that support the hypothesis and features that challenge the hypothesis are detailed.  <b><u>Neither significance nor relative importance are attributed to the features listed.</u></b>  The indicative content is intended to reflect the knowledge and understanding a candidate is likely to analyse and evaluate in order to arrive at a judgement in line with the question set.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No set answer is expected</li> <li>• At higher levels answers might establish criteria against which to judge the validity of the interpretation.</li> <li>• To be valid, judgements must be supported by relevant and accurate material.</li> <li>• Knowledge must not be credited in isolation. It should only be credited where it is used as the basis for analysis and evaluation, in line with descriptions in the levels mark scheme.</li> </ul>

Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
			<p><b>In challenging the hypothesis in the question,</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>It might be argued</b> that the talents of Mehmed II, who captured Constantinople, and Selim were important</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the expansion under Mehmed, who is seen as the real founder of the Ottoman Empire</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the development of the army and navy under Bayezid</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the issue of succession and the survival of the fittest</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the conquests of Selim and the development of trade routes to increase income and self-funding conquest</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the system of government and logistics developed by Sulieman's predecessors</li> </ul>		

Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
3*			<p><b>To what extent did the Ottomans establish a meritocratic society in their vassal states during the period from 1453 to 1606?</b></p> <p><b>Answers might consider some of the following themes:</b> the timar system, religion, promotion, the class system, impact of the Devshirme, the nobility</p> <p><b>In arguing that the Ottomans established a meritocratic system:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the destruction of the local nobility</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the resettlement of peoples which confused national identities</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> that the taxation system was fairer</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the protection given to peasants</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the devshirme system which provided an education, training and career opportunities</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> that those who were not suitable for palace service became janissaries</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> that status depended upon value to the state</li> </ul> <p><b>In arguing that the Ottomans did not establish a meritocratic system:</b></p>	25	<p>The indicative content lists features of the period studied that relate to the question set. Both features that support the hypothesis and features that challenge the hypothesis are detailed.</p> <p><b><u>Neither significance nor relative importance are attributed to the features listed.</u></b></p> <p>The indicative content is intended to reflect the knowledge and understanding a candidate is likely to analyse and evaluate in order to arrive at a judgement in line with the question set.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No set answer is expected</li> <li>• At higher levels answers might establish criteria against which to judge the 'meritocracy.'</li> <li>• To be valid, judgements must be supported by relevant and accurate material.</li> <li>• Knowledge must not be credited in isolation. It should only be credited where it is used as the basis for analysis and evaluation, in line with descriptions in the levels mark scheme.</li> </ul>

Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the financial and taxation benefits of Muslim subjects</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the establishment of the timar system, which initially benefitted native born Muslims</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the later distribution of timars</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the suppression of Roman Catholicism</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the extent to which the sipahi enabled a meritocracy</li> </ul>		
4*			<p><b>‘The failure of the siege of Vienna was the greatest success for European rulers in resisting Ottoman expansion in the period from 1453 to 1606.</b></p> <p><b>How far do you agree?</b></p> <p><b>Answers might consider some of the following themes:</b> Military, political, religious, economic, social</p> <p><b>In supporting the hypothesis in the question:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the size of the two forces as the Ottomans greatly outnumbered the defenders</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the importance of stopping the Ottoman advance into central Europe</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the psychological impact of the victory</li> </ul>	25	<p>The indicative content lists features of the period studied that relate to the question set. Both features that support the hypothesis and features that challenge the hypothesis are detailed.</p> <p><b><u>Neither significance nor relative importance are attributed to the features listed.</u></b></p> <p>The indicative content is intended to reflect the knowledge and understanding a candidate is likely to analyse and evaluate in order to arrive at a judgement in line with the question set.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No set answer is expected.</li> <li>• At higher levels answers might establish criteria against which to judge the validity of the interpretation.</li> <li>• To be valid, judgements must be supported by relevant and accurate material.</li> <li>• Knowledge must not be credited in isolation. It should only be credited where it is used as the</li> </ul>

Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> that Charles V prepared an army for future defence which deterred the Ottoman attack in 1532</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the failure showed the logistical limits of Ottoman expansion</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> that other victories, such as Lepanto, had only a short term gain</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> it represented recovery after Mohacs</li> </ul> <p><b>In challenging the hypothesis in the question:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the naval victory at Lepanto, which brought great prestige</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> limited success of the Ottomans in challenging Spanish power in the western Mediterranean</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the ability of the Pope to form a Holy League against the Ottomans</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> that some Italian states saw success in continuing to trade with the Ottomans</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the Russian resistance to Ottoman expansion in 1569</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> the taking of Tunis in 1535 was a greater success (but this was short-lived)</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> Vienna was scarcely a success as the Ottomans withdrew due to weak supply lines</li> <li>• <b>Answers might consider</b> that Vienna was not a success as the Ottomans still controlled Hungary</li> </ul>		basis for analysis and evaluation, in line with descriptions in the levels mark scheme.

## APPENDIX 1 – this contains a generic mark scheme grid

	<i>AO3: Analyse and evaluate, in relation to the historical context, different ways in which aspects of the past have been interpreted.</i>
	<b>Generic mark scheme for Section A, Question 1: Interpretation [30]</b>
<b>Level 6</b> 26–30 marks	The answer has a very good focus on the question throughout. It has thorough and sustained evaluation of the interpretations, using detailed and accurate knowledge of the historical context and the wider historical debate around the issue, in order to produce a convincing and supported analysis of them in relation to the question.
<b>Level 5</b> 21–25 marks	The answer has a good focus on the question throughout. It has good evaluation of the interpretations, using relevant knowledge of the historical context and the wider historical debate around the issue, in order to produce a supported analysis of them in relation to the question.
<b>Level 4</b> 16–20 marks	The answer is mostly focused on the question. It has evaluation of the interpretations based on generally relevant knowledge of the historical context and the wider historical debate around the issue, in order to produce an analysis of them in relation to the question.
<b>Level 3</b> 11–15 marks	The answer is partially focused on the question. It has partial evaluation of the interpretations based on some knowledge of the historical context and the wider historical debate around the issue. There may be some use of information from one of the two interpretations to support the evaluation of the other, but the evaluation will not rely on this. There is a limited analysis of the interpretations in relation to the question.
<b>Level 2</b> 6–10 marks	The answer has a limited focus on the question. Parts of the answer are just description of the interpretations, with evaluation in relation to historical context and the wider historical debate around the issue being weak, and evaluation relying heavily on information drawn from the other interpretation. There is a very limited analysis of the interpretations in relation to the question.
<b>Level 1</b> 1–5 marks	The answer has some relevance to the topic, but not the specific question. The answer consists mostly of description of the interpretations with very limited evaluation based on very generalised knowledge of historical context and minimal or no reference to the wider historical debate. Analysis of the interpretations in relation to the question is either in the form of assertion or lacking.
<b>0 marks</b>	No evidence of understanding and no demonstration of any relevant knowledge.

	<i>AO1: Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.</i>
	<b>Generic mark scheme for Section B, Questions 2, 3 and 4: Essay [25]</b>
<b>Level 6</b> 21–25 marks	The answer has a very good focus on the question. Detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding is used to analyse and evaluate key features of the period studied in order to reach a fully developed synthesis supporting a convincing and substantiated judgement. There is a well-developed and sustained line of reasoning which is coherent and logically structured. The information presented is entirely relevant and substantiated.
<b>Level 5</b> 17–20 marks	The answer has a good focus on the question. Generally accurate and detailed knowledge and understanding is used to analyse and evaluate key features of the period studied in order to reach a developed synthesis supporting a substantiated judgement. There is a well-developed line of reasoning which is clear and logically structured. The information presented is relevant and in the most part substantiated.
<b>Level 4</b> 13–16 marks	The answer is mostly focused on the question. Relevant knowledge and understanding is used to analyse and evaluate key features of the period studied in order to reach a synthesis supporting a reasonable judgement. There is a line of reasoning presented with some structure. The information presented is in the most-part relevant and supported by some evidence.
<b>Level 3</b> 9–12 marks	The answer has a partial focus on the question. Some relevant knowledge and understanding is used to analyse and explain key features of the period studied in order to attempt an undeveloped synthesis, which is linked to a judgement, though the supporting explanation may lack detail and clarity. The information has some relevance and is presented with limited structure. The information is supported by limited evidence.
<b>Level 2</b> 5–8 marks	The answer has only a limited focus on the question. Limited relevant knowledge and understanding is used to give a limited explanation and analysis of key features of the period studied. There is a judgement but this may not be clearly linked with the supporting explanation. The information has some relevance, but is communicated in an unstructured way. The information is supported by limited evidence and the relationship to the evidence may not be clear.
<b>Level 1</b> 1–4 marks	The answer has a limited focus on the topic, but not the specific question. The answer is largely descriptive, with only very generalised knowledge of the period studied being used to attempt basic explanation and very limited analysis. Judgements are unsupported and are not linked to analysis. Information presented is basic and may be ambiguous or unstructured. The information is supported by limited evidence.
<b>0 marks</b>	The answer contains no relevant information.



## Need to get in touch?

If you ever have any questions about OCR qualifications or services (including administration, logistics and teaching) please feel free to get in touch with our customer support centre.

### Call us on

**01223 553998**

### Alternatively, you can email us on

**support@ocr.org.uk**

### For more information visit



**ocr.org.uk/qualifications/resource-finder**



**ocr.org.uk**



**Twitter/ocrextams**



**/ocrextams**



**/company/ocr**



**/ocrextams**



**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS & ASSESSMENT

OCR is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment, a department of the University of Cambridge.

For staff training purposes and as part of our quality assurance programme your call may be recorded or monitored. © OCR 2024 Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations is a Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in England. Registered office The Triangle Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge, CB2 8EA.

Registered company number 3484466. OCR is an exempt charity.

OCR operates academic and vocational qualifications regulated by Ofqual, Qualifications Wales and CCEA as listed in their qualifications registers including A Levels, GCSEs, Cambridge Technicals and Cambridge Nationals.

OCR provides resources to help you deliver our qualifications. These resources do not represent any particular teaching method we expect you to use. We update our resources regularly and aim to make sure content is accurate but please check the OCR website so that you have the most up-to-date version. OCR cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions in these resources.

Though we make every effort to check our resources, there may be contradictions between published support and the specification, so it is important that you always use information in the latest specification. We indicate any specification changes within the document itself, change the version number and provide a summary of the changes. If you do notice a discrepancy between the specification and a resource, please [contact us](#).

Whether you already offer OCR qualifications, are new to OCR or are thinking about switching, you can request more information using our [Expression of Interest form](#).

Please [get in touch](#) if you want to discuss the accessibility of resources we offer to support you in delivering our qualifications.