

External assessment

Two different methods are used to assess work produced by students.

- Markbands
- Detailed markschemes specific to each examination paper

The markbands for each component are published in this guide. The markbands are related to the assessment objectives established for the history course and the group 3 grade descriptors. The markschemes are specific to each examination.

External assessment details

Paper 1 (SL and HL)

Duration: 1 hour

Weighting: 30% SL, 20% HL

Paper 1 is a source-based examination paper based on the prescribed subjects. Each prescribed subject consists of two specified case studies, and in each examination session the paper will focus on **one** of the two case studies specified for each prescribed subject.

The paper will contain four sources for each prescribed subject. Sources will be primary or a mixture of primary and secondary, and may be written, pictorial or diagrammatic. The paper will consist of four questions for each prescribed subject, and students must answer all four questions from their chosen prescribed subject. Some questions will be answered using only evidence from one or more of the sources, as indicated. In other questions students will be asked to use their own knowledge of the prescribed subject as well as evidence contained in the sources.

First question, part A	This question will test understanding of one of the sources.	3 marks
First question, part B	This question will test understanding of one of the sources.	2 marks
Second question	This question will ask students to analyse the value and limitations of one of the sources. In their analysis of value and limitations, students should refer to the origin, purpose and content of the specified source.	4 marks
Third question	This question will ask students to compare and contrast what two of the sources reveal to a historian studying the particular aspect of the prescribed subject.	6 marks
Fourth question	This will be an evaluative question that asks students to draw on both the sources and their own knowledge in their evaluation.	9 marks

The maximum mark for this paper is 24. The paper is marked using a paper-specific markscheme, except for the final question for each prescribed subject, which is marked using the generic markbands that follow, in addition to a paper-specific markscheme.

External markbands—paper 1 (fourth question) (SL and HL)

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The response does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–3	<p>The response lacks focus on the question.</p> <p>References to the sources are made, but at this level these references are likely to consist of descriptions of the content of the sources rather than the sources being used as evidence to support the analysis.</p> <p>No own knowledge is demonstrated or, where it is demonstrated, it is inaccurate or irrelevant.</p>
4–6	<p>The response is generally focused on the question.</p> <p>References are made to the sources, and these references are used as evidence to support the analysis.</p> <p>Where own knowledge is demonstrated, this lacks relevance or accuracy. There is little or no attempt to synthesize own knowledge and source material.</p>
7–9	<p>The response is focused on the question.</p> <p>Clear references are made to the sources, and these references are used effectively as evidence to support the analysis.</p> <p>Accurate and relevant own knowledge is demonstrated. There is effective synthesis of own knowledge and source material.</p>

Paper 2 (SL and HL)**Duration:** 1 hour 30 minutes**Weighting:** 45% SL, 25% HL

Paper 2 is an essay paper based on the 12 world history topics.

The paper consists of two questions for each of the 12 topics. Students must answer **two** questions, each selected from a **different** topic. Some comparative questions on this paper require that examples be drawn from more than one region. When the word “region” is used in a paper 2 question, it refers to one of the four regional options defined by the world map in the introduction to the world history topics in the “World history topics” section.

The maximum mark for this paper is 30. The paper is marked using generic markbands and a paper-specific markscheme.

Paper 3 (HL only)**Duration:** 2 hours 30 minutes**Weighting:** 35%

Each of the four HL regional options has a separate examination paper. Students are registered for one of these papers.

The paper 3 examination paper for each regional option will consist of 36 questions, consisting of two essay questions on each of the 18 sections specified for the regional option. Students must answer any **three** questions. Questions that refer to specific countries, events or people are restricted to those listed in the syllabus descriptions. The maximum mark for this paper is 45. The paper is marked using generic markbands and a paper-specific markscheme.

External markbands—paper 2 (SL and HL)

Marks	Level descriptor
0	Answers do not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–3	<p>There is little understanding of the demands of the question. The response is poorly structured or, where there is a recognizable essay structure, there is minimal focus on the task.</p> <p>Little knowledge of the world history topic is present.</p> <p>The student identifies examples to discuss, but these examples are factually incorrect, irrelevant or vague.</p> <p>The response contains little or no critical analysis. The response may consist mostly of generalizations and poorly substantiated assertions.</p>
4–6	<p>The response indicates some understanding of the demands of the question. While there may be an attempt to follow a structured approach, the response lacks clarity and coherence.</p> <p>Knowledge of the world history topic is demonstrated, but lacks accuracy and relevance. There is a superficial understanding of historical context.</p> <p>The student identifies specific examples to discuss, but these examples are vague or lack relevance.</p> <p>There is some limited analysis, but the response is primarily narrative/descriptive in nature rather than analytical.</p>
7–9	<p>The response indicates an understanding of the demands of the question, but these demands are only partially addressed. There is an attempt to follow a structured approach.</p> <p>Knowledge of the world history topic is partly accurate and relevant. Events are generally placed in their historical context.</p> <p>The examples that the student chooses to discuss are appropriate and relevant. The response makes links and/or comparisons (as appropriate to the question).</p> <p>The response moves beyond description to include some analysis or critical commentary, but this is not sustained.</p>
10–12	<p>The demands of the question are understood and addressed. Responses are generally well structured and organized, although there is some repetition or lack of clarity in places.</p> <p>Knowledge of the world history topic is mostly accurate and relevant. Events are placed in their historical context, and there is some understanding of historical concepts.</p> <p>The examples that the student chooses to discuss are appropriate and relevant, and are used to support the analysis/evaluation. The response makes effective links and/or comparisons (as appropriate to the question).</p> <p>The response contains critical analysis, which is mainly clear and coherent. There is some awareness and evaluation of different perspectives. Most of the main points are substantiated and the response argues to a consistent conclusion.</p>

Marks	Level descriptor
13–15	<p>Responses are clearly focused, showing a high degree of awareness of the demands and implications of the question. Responses are well structured and effectively organized.</p> <p>Knowledge of the world history topic is accurate and relevant. Events are placed in their historical context, and there is a clear understanding of historical concepts.</p> <p>The examples that the student chooses to discuss are appropriate and relevant, and are used effectively to support the analysis/evaluation. The response makes effective links and/or comparisons (as appropriate to the question).</p> <p>The response contains clear and coherent critical analysis. There is evaluation of different perspectives, and this evaluation is integrated effectively into the answer. All, or nearly all, of the main points are substantiated, and the response argues to a consistent conclusion.</p>

External markbands—paper 3 (HL)

Marks	Level descriptor
0	Response does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–3	<p>There is little understanding of the demands of the question. The response is poorly structured or, where there is a recognizable essay structure, there is minimal focus on the task.</p> <p>Little knowledge is present. Where specific examples are referred to, they are factually incorrect, irrelevant or vague.</p> <p>The response contains little or no critical analysis. It may consist mostly of generalizations and poorly substantiated assertions.</p>
4–6	<p>The response indicates some understanding of the demands of the question. While there may be an attempt to follow a structured approach, the response lacks clarity and coherence.</p> <p>Knowledge is demonstrated but lacks accuracy and relevance. There is a superficial understanding of historical context. The answer makes use of specific examples, although these may be vague or lack relevance.</p> <p>There is some limited analysis, but the response is primarily narrative/descriptive in nature, rather than analytical.</p>
7–9	<p>The response indicates an understanding of the demands of the question, but these demands are only partially addressed. There is an attempt to follow a structured approach.</p> <p>Knowledge is partly accurate and relevant. Events are generally placed in their historical context. Examples used are appropriate and relevant.</p> <p>The response moves beyond description to include some analysis or critical commentary, but this is not sustained.</p>
10–12	<p>The demands of the question are understood and addressed. Answers are generally well structured and organized, although there may be some repetition or lack of clarity in places.</p> <p>Knowledge is mostly accurate and relevant. Events are placed in their historical context, and there is a clear understanding of historical concepts. Examples used are appropriate and relevant, and are used to support the analysis/evaluation.</p> <p>Arguments are mainly clear and coherent. There is some awareness and evaluation of different perspectives.</p> <p>The response contains critical analysis. Most of the main points are substantiated, and the response argues to a consistent conclusion.</p>

Marks	Level descriptor
13–15	<p>Responses are clearly focused, showing a high degree of awareness of the demands and implications of the question. Answers are well structured, balanced and effectively organized.</p> <p>Knowledge is detailed, accurate and relevant. Events are placed in their historical context, and there is a clear understanding of historical concepts. Examples used are appropriate and relevant, and are used effectively to support the analysis/evaluation.</p> <p>Arguments are clear and coherent. There is evaluation of different perspectives, and this evaluation is integrated effectively into the answer.</p> <p>The answer contains well-developed critical analysis. All, or nearly all, of the main points are substantiated, and the response argues to a reasoned conclusion.</p>