

# GCSE HISTORY

(8145)

Marked Papers 2B/A -  
Norman England, c1066-c1100

Understand how to apply the mark scheme for our sample  
assessment papers.

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# EXAMPLE RESPONSES



## Example responses plus commentaries

The following student responses are intended to illustrate how the mark scheme can be interpreted and how it is likely that students will respond to the questions, allowing the student and teacher to explore and reflect upon the mark scheme and how answers can be improved.

## Question 01

Study **Interpretation A** in the Interpretations Booklet.

How convincing is **Interpretation A** about the impact of the Normans on English monasteries?

Explain your answer using **Interpretation A** and your contextual knowledge?

[8 marks]

## Mark scheme

The indicative content is designed to exemplify the qualities expected at each level and is not a full example answer. All historically relevant and valid answers should be credited.

<b>Target</b>	<b>Analyse individual interpretations (AO4a)</b> <b>Evaluate interpretations and make substantiated judgements in the context of historical events studied (AO4d)</b>	
<b>Level 4</b>	<b>Complex evaluation of interpretation with sustained judgement based on contextual knowledge/understanding</b> Extends Level 3. Students may progress from a developed evaluation of interpretation by complex analysis of the interpretation supported by factual knowledge and understanding. For example, I think it is very convincing because the new Norman abbots had a great impact and brought reform. England was a little bit behind continental church reform led by the Papacy. But some change was structural rather than intellectual like more use of Latin. The Norman Archbishop Lanfranc held several church councils in England to encourage reform and tried to stop the marriage of priests, and the selling of church offices. Whilst the Pope had supported William's invasion there was some tension between Pope Gregory VII over his claims to overlordship of England.	<b>7–8</b>
<b>Level 3</b>	<b>Developed evaluation of interpretation based on contextual knowledge/understanding</b> Extends Level 2. Students may progress from a simple evaluation of the interpretation by extended reasoning supported by factual knowledge and understanding of more than one aspect of the interpretation. For example, I think this is convincing because they did change things, it says that the monks had to accept 'new superiors' and I know that the Abbots of Canterbury, Glastonbury, Tavistock, and Winchester were all removed because William the Conqueror could not rely on their loyalty. By 1072 men from Normandy had replaced them.	<b>5–6</b>

I think it is convincing because it says that they 'built new monasteries' and I know that monks were sent over from Normandy and William de Warenne set up a Cluniac Priory near his Castle at Lewes, by the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century there were 36 Cluniac houses or monasteries.

**Level 2      Simple evaluation of interpretation based on contextual knowledge/understanding      3–4**

Students may progress from a basic analysis of interpretation by reasoning supported with factual knowledge and understanding based on one aspect of the interpretation.

For example, I think it is quite convincing because it says they had 'new superiors' and the new Norman abbots spoke Norman French which the Anglo-Saxon monks would not understand. The new abbots did not like or respect the old English saints.

**Level 1      Basic analysis of interpretation based on contextual knowledge/understanding      1–2**

Answers show understanding/support for interpretation but the case is made by assertion/recognition of agreement.

For example, answers stating it is convincing because it shows... The Normans built many new monasteries. They brought over monks from Normandy for these monasteries.

**Students either submit no evidence or fail to address the question      0**

## Responses

### Student one

Interpretation A is convincing about the impact of the Normans on monasteries because it shows how Norman actions had a number of different impacts. The interpretation shows how some actions that 'lacked respect' by the new Norman monastic leaders were unpopular with the English monks. For example, in 1083, the new Abbot of Glastonbury called Thurstan. Ordered his monks to use a Norman chant in their services and sent knights into the church to force them, which resulted in 3 monks being killed and 18 injured. These new ideas were 'disturbing' to the English monks, who were a decade behind the reforms that were happening in Normandy.

However, even though A shows the negative reaction for English monks, it shows that the reforms were good for English monasteries. The Normans brought in new learning from Europe, like when Lewes Priory was controlled from Cluny in France, which was known for its quality scholars and learning about St Benedict. The Normans also built new monasteries in new areas like Whitby abbey in the north of England, which helped to spread the church's influence. Some parts of Anglo-Saxon practice such as saint worship, shown by St Cuthbert's relics at Durham, were respected by the Normans. Therefore, the interpretation is convincing because it shows that even though the 'fresh intellectual life' was not popular with English monks and created tension, it helped to lead to the growth of the church throughout Norman England.

## Commentary – Level 4

The answer evaluates more than one aspect of the interpretation. Complex thinking is shown in the sustained judgement of a complex idea in the interpretation (the actions of the Normans were both positive for the church but unpopular with monks, the different Norman attitudes to existing Anglo-Saxon religious practice). This is supported with accurate and relevant factual knowledge and understanding.

### Student two

The interpretation is convincing because English monks did not like many of the changes made after the Norman Conquest. For example, the Normans made many of the Abbots Norman, so that by 1086 only 3 Anglo-Saxon abbots remained from the 13 in 1075. They formed new dioceses, so that the king could ensure that he had support from the Church. This new organisation took away power from the English monks, who had to accept 'new superiors' and made them feel disrespected, which supports the interpretation.

The Normans also built lots of new monastic cathedrals like Durham and Norwich, so the interpretation is right. This would also have annoyed the English monks by taking away their lands and taking their valuable treasures which they sent to Normandy. This would have deeply disturbed the English monks, as the interpretation says.

## Commentary – Level 3

The response shows a mixture of developed and simple evaluation of more than one aspect of the interpretation. The first point confirms an aspect of the interpretation with accurate contextual knowledge and understanding of the re-organisation of the church under the Normans, showing developed evaluation. The second paragraph is not developed. To progress, the answer requires a substantiated judgement.

## Question 02

Explain what was important about land holding and lordship in Norman England.

[8 marks]

### Mark scheme

The indicative content is designed to exemplify the qualities expected at each level and is not a full example answer. All historically relevant and valid answers should be credited.

<b>Target</b>	<b>Explain and analyse historical events and periods studied using second-order concepts (AO2:4)</b>	
	<b>Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key features and characteristics of the period studied (AO1:4)</b>	
<b>Level 4</b>	<b>Complex explanation of consequences</b>	<b>7–8</b>
	<b>Answer demonstrates a range of accurate and detailed knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question</b>	
	Extends Level 3.	
	Students may progress from a developed explanation by extended analysis of the consequences of the stated development (changes to landholding) in the broader historical context (Norman England). This is supported by factual knowledge and understanding.	
	For example, although William's distribution of land made lordships more compact the impact of this would have been affected by nobles who then granted out pieces of land to their followers. When there were revolts by nobles William broke up the compact lordships such as with the Earl of Shrewsbury, who controlled most of Shropshire.	
<b>Level 3</b>	<b>Developed explanation of consequences</b>	<b>5–6</b>
	<b>Answer demonstrates a range of accurate knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question</b>	
	Extends Level 2.	
	Students may progress from a simple explanation by developed reasoning considering <b>two or more</b> of the identified consequences, supporting them by factual knowledge and understanding.	
	In addition to a Level 2 response, students make additional developed point(s).	
	For example, land was shared out amongst the 200 or so tenants in chief. The Anglo-Saxons had a half a dozen very wealthy earls, some wealthy thanes, and then many minor landholders. But it was important that William had changed the balance of land	



holding between the king and the nobility. There were now 200 or so who were not as rich as an earl in Edward the Confessor's time but much wealthier than an Anglo-Saxon thane.

For example, what was important about landholding was William gave out more consolidated, compact lordships such as were common in Normandy. Sometimes he just dispossessed an English noble and gave one of his followers their land, sometimes he gave big blocks of land in areas that were militarily sensitive, like Cheshire. Sometimes he lumped together bits of land from many minor landowners. Sometimes the local Norman Lord took land because on the ground it made geographical sense and they could do it. This was a major change in the pattern of landholding.

**Level 2 Simple explanation of one consequence 3–4**

**Answer demonstrates specific knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question**

Students may progress from a basic explanation by simple reasoning of **one** of the identified consequences, supporting by factual knowledge and understanding.

For example, it was important that the king gave out land to his followers it was given out in much more compact units rather than the old Anglo-Saxon estates which tend to be more widely scattered. William would lump together the lands of small landholders and give them to a single new Norman Lord. This was important because it would have been a big change.

**Level 1 Basic explanation of consequence(s) 1–2**

**Answer demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question**

Students identify consequence(s), which are relevant to the question. Explanation at this level is likely to be implicit or by assertion.

For example, the king owned all of the land because he had conquered it.

**Students either submit no evidence or fail to address the question 0**

## Responses

### Student one

William used landholding and lordship to increase his power after the Conquest, which made them politically important. After William won the Battle of Hastings, he had to reward the people who had supported him. For example, he made William FitzOsbern the first Earl of Hereford in 1067, and rewarded him with lands in Oxfordshire, Dorset and Berkshire. In exchange for their new power and wealth the Norman Lords had to support William, including fighting for him and supporting his policies. This was important because it meant that William's power was protected, and allowed William to deal with threats when they happened.

William also made sure that the church was given enough lands in England, which was important for religion in Norman England. For example, while William claimed all of the land in England after Hastings, he gave about a quarter of it back to the church. This was important for Norman England because it allowed the church to build spectacular new monasteries and cathedrals throughout England like Durham Cathedral, which helped the Normans to take control of the church after the conquest. This was also politically important, because senior churchmen like Bishop Odo acted as regents for William in areas of the country that needed to be brought under control, like in the North of England where many people had connections to the Vikings.

### Commentary – Level 4

The response shows a complex explanation of the consequences of landholding and lordship in Norman England. More than one consequence is identified, explained in the broader historical context, and supported with detailed and relevant knowledge and understanding. For example, the first point explains the broader political consequence of landholding and lordship, while the second point explains the broader religious and associated political consequences.

### Student two

Landholding and lordship was important because it made some Normans more powerful. For example, Robert, Count of Mortain gave his half-brother William his ships for the invasion of England. After the Battle of Hastings, he was given huge areas of land in 20 counties and later on was sent by William to help him run Normandy when he wasn't there. This helped to make people more loyal to William, because they could see that he was going to be good for their careers and power.

Landholding was also important because it gave opportunities to knights in England. Under the feudal system, William gave land to his nobles in exchange for their loyalty, and the nobles gave land to knights in exchange for their military service when they needed it. Norman knights who served powerful barons could build up their power because the barons gave them land which they gave on to peasants. This made knights more important in Norman England.

### Commentary – Level 3

The response shows developed explanation of more than one consequence of landholding and lordship. The first paragraph identifies a relevant consequence (power was given to certain Norman barons) and supports it with factual knowledge and understanding. The second point related to the consequences for Norman knights is weaker, as the description of the feudal system is generalised and requires further substantiation. To progress, the response could explain the consequences of the stated development in the broader historical context, for example, by explaining how the loyalty of barons like Robert of Mortain impacted upon William's power, perhaps substantiated with further reference to his military service.



## Question 03

Write an account of the ways in which the feudal system changed under the Normans.

[8 marks]

### Mark scheme

The indicative content is designed to exemplify the qualities expected at each level and is not a full example answer. All historically relevant and valid answers should be credited.

**Target Explain and analyse historical events and periods studied using second-order concepts (AO2:4)**

**Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key features and characteristics of the period studied (AO1:4)**

**Level 4 Complex analysis of changes 7–8**

**Answer is presented in a coherent narrative/account that demonstrates a range of accurate and detailed knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question**

Extends Level 3.

Students may progress from a developed narrative of change(s) with complex reasoning supported by a range of accurate and detailed factual knowledge and understanding. For example, an explanation of different impacts/consequences of change in the broader historical context.

For example, William replaced the Anglo-Saxon nobles with his loyal Norman supporters. Many of the lesser English nobles were allowed to recover some of their lands and did deals with the King or the new French Lord. Although their holding may have been reduced, and they had to pay for the privilege, if they showed loyalty, they could recover some of their wealth and position. There was a 'feudal' system before the Normans and it could be argued that for the majority of the ordinary peasants there was little change in their everyday lives after the Normans took over.

**Level 3 Developed analysis of change(s) 5–6**

**Answer is presented in a structured and well-ordered narrative/account that demonstrates a range of accurate knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question**

Extends Level 2.

Students may progress from a simple narrative of change(s) with extended reasoning supported by a range of factual knowledge and understanding. For example, one consequence or impact of the ways in which the feudal system changed.

For example, the Normans changed the basis of land-holding and military service. William took all the ownership of the land and

replaced the aristocracy of England with his Norman followers. After 1075 all the Earldoms were held by Normans and by 1096 all the bishoprics were held by Normans.

**Level 2 Simple analysis of change(s) 3–4**

**Answer is presented in a structured account that demonstrates specific knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question**

Students may progress from a basic narrative of change(s) by showing a simple understanding of consequence(s) with supported with factual knowledge and understanding.

For example, William took all the ownership of the land and replaced the aristocracy of England with his Norman followers. This was their reward for supporting him in the Conquest and meant that his followers, not the Anglo-Saxon nobles, held the positions of power.

**Level 1 Basic analysis of change(s) 1–2**

**Answer is presented in a straightforward account that demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question**

Students identify a basic narrative of change, which is relevant to the question.

For example, after William conquered England, he took the land from the Anglo-Saxon nobles and gave it to his loyal followers.

**Students either submit no evidence or fail to address the question 0**

## Responses

### Student one

One way that the feudal system changed was that the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy lost most of their power under the Normans. However, William changed the people running the system to Norman supporters which meant that many English earls were left with nothing. This was because William claimed all of the land in England that used to be theirs and used the feudal system to reward the Norman barons and churchman who helped him to secure power in England by giving them parcels of land. For example, he made his half-brother Bishop Odo the Earl of Kent in after he fought in the Battle of Hastings. The changes that William made to the feudal system meant that by 1076 there were only two Englishmen who owned land that had been given to them by the king.

The feudal system also changed the way that land was passed on from one earl to another. Before the Normans, the Anglo-Saxons used to divide land up between members of the family of the landowner. However, the Normans changed this by introducing the idea of primogeniture, where the oldest son took over the land when a baron died. Even though this meant that younger sons and daughters lost out, primogeniture helped to keep the feudal system strong, because it meant that landholding was kept together as a powerful unit rather than being dispersed into

smaller units. If there was any disagreement over who would get the land, then these would be dealt with by the Norman feudal court, so the changes to the feudal system allowed land to pass from the earl to his first son smoothly.

### Commentary – Level 4

The response shows complex thinking. The response explains and substantiates more than one broader impact that the Normans had on the feudal system, supported with a range of accurate and detailed factual knowledge and understanding.

### Student two

The Normans introduced the Feudal System to England, which they brought over from France. Here the king was the top of the pyramid and each group in the sections below gave loyalty and service to the people above them. The peasants worked for the knights, who supported the barons, who had to work for the king. People had to take oaths of loyalty and these were taken very seriously in Norman England, as disagreeing with them was like disagreeing with God and nobody would do that.

William the Conqueror also got rid of the English nobles who did not support him and brought in his own Norman friends and supporters. This meant that the peasants had less in common with the people above them than in Anglo-Saxon England, where everybody was Anglo-Saxon.

### Commentary – Level 2

The response shows simple analysis of changes to the feudal system. It demonstrates knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question, though much of the answer is descriptive of the changes related to the feudal system. To progress, the answer should try to explain how William giving power to his Norman supporters marked a change for the feudal system.

## Further information

For examples of the Historic Environment question, please see the Elizabethan England student responses.

## Get help and support

Visit our website for information, guidance, support and resources at [aqa.org.uk/8145](https://aqa.org.uk/8145)

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