

MARK SCHEME for the May/June 2014 series

9769 HISTORY

9769/58

Paper 5h (Special Subject: Gladstone and Disraeli, 1867–1886), maximum raw mark 60

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began, which would have considered the acceptability of alternative answers.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the question paper and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

Cambridge will not enter into discussions about these mark schemes.

Cambridge is publishing the mark schemes for the May/June 2014 series for most IGCSE, Pre-U, GCE Advanced Level and Advanced Subsidiary Level components and some Ordinary Level components.

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Special Subjects: Document Question

These banding definitions address Assessment Objectives 1, 2, 3 and 4, and should be used in conjunction with the indicative content mark schemes for each question.

Introduction

This question is designed largely to test skills in the handling and evaluation of source material but it is axiomatic that answers should be informed by and firmly grounded in wider contextual knowledge.

Examiners should be aware that the topic on which this question has been based has been notified to candidates in advance who, therefore, have had the opportunity of studying, using and evaluating relevant documents.

The band in which an answer is placed depends upon a range of criteria. As a result, not all answers fall obviously into one particular band. In such cases, a 'best-fit' approach should be adopted with any doubt erring on the side of generosity.

In marking an answer examiners should first place it in a band and then fine-tune the mark in terms of how strongly/weakly the demands of the band have been met.

Question 1 (a)

Band 1: 8–10

The answer will make full use of both documents and will be sharply aware of both similarities and differences. Real comparisons of themes and issues will be made across the documents rather than by separate treatment. There should be clear insights into how the documents corroborate each other or differ and, possibly, as to why. The answer should, where appropriate, demonstrate a strong sense of critical evaluation.

Band 2: 4–7

The response will make good use of both documents and will pick up the main features of the thrust of the argument (depending upon whether similarity or difference is asked) with some attention to the alternative. Direct comparison of content, themes and issues is to be expected although, at the lower end of the band, there may be a tendency to treat the documents separately with most or all of the comparison and analysis being left to the end. Again, towards the lower end, there may be some paraphrasing. Clear explanation of how the documents agree or differ is to be expected but insights into why are less likely. A sound critical sense is to be expected especially at the upper end of the band.

Band 3: 0–3

Treatment of the documents will be partial, certainly incomplete and possibly fragmentary. Only the most obvious differences/similarities will be detected and there will be a considerable imbalance (differences may be picked up but not similarities and vice versa). Little is to be expected by way of explanation of how the documents show differences/similarities, and the work will be characterised by largely uncritical paraphrasing.

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Question 1 (b)

Band 1: 16–20

The answer will treat the documents as a set and will make very effective use of each although, depending upon the exact form of the question, not necessarily in the same detail. It will be clear that the demands of the question have been fully understood and the material will be handled confidently with a strong sense of argument and analysis. Good use of supporting contextual knowledge will be demonstrated. The material deployed will be strong in both range and depth. Critical evaluation of the documents is to be expected. The argument will be well structured. Historical concepts and vocabulary will be fully understood. Where appropriate, an understanding and evaluation of differing historical interpretations is to be expected. English will be fluent, clear and virtually error-free.

Band 2: 11–15

The answer will treat the documents as a set and make good use of them although, depending on the form of the question, not necessarily in equal detail. There may, however, be some omissions and gaps. A good understanding of the question will be demonstrated. There will be a good sense of argument and analysis within a secure and planned structure. Supporting use of contextual knowledge is to be expected and will be deployed in appropriate range and depth. Some clear signs of a critical sense will be on show although critical evaluation of the documents may not always be especially well developed and may well be absent at the lower end of the band. Where appropriate, an understanding and evaluation of differing historical interpretations may be expected. The answer will demonstrate a good understanding of historical concepts and vocabulary and will be expressed in clear, accurate English.

Band 3: 6–10

There will be some regard to the documents as a set and a fair coverage, although there will be gaps and one or two documents may be unaccountably neglected or, especially at the lower end of the band, ignored altogether. The demands of the question will be understood at least in good part and an argument will be attempted. This may well be undeveloped and/or insufficiently supported in places. Analysis will be at a modest level and narrative is likely to take over in places with a consequent lack of focus. Some of the work will not go beyond paraphrasing. Supporting contextual knowledge will be deployed but unevenly. Any critical sense will be limited; formal critical evaluation is rarely to be expected; use of historical concepts will be unsophisticated. Although use of English should be generally clear, there may well be some errors.

Band 4: 0–5

The answer will treat the documents as a set only to a limited extent. Coverage will be very uneven; there will be considerable omissions with whole sections left unconsidered. Some understanding of the question will be demonstrated, but any argument will be undeveloped and poorly supported. Analysis will appear rarely, narrative will predominate and focus will be very blurred. In large part the answer will depend upon unadorned paraphrasing. Critical sense and evaluation, even at an elementary level, is unlikely whilst understanding of historical concepts will be at a low level. The answer may well be slight, fragmentary or even unfinished. English will lack real clarity and fluency and there will be errors.

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Special Subject Essays

These banding definitions address Assessment Objectives 1, 2 and 4, and should be used in conjunction with the indicative content mark schemes for each question.

Introduction

- (a) The banding definitions which follow reflect, and must be interpreted within the context of, the following general statement:

Examiners should give their highest marks to candidates who show a ready understanding of the relevant material and a disciplined management of the discussion the question provokes. They should be impressed more by critical judgement, careful discrimination and imaginative handling than by a weight of facts. Credit should be given for evidence of a good historical intelligence and for good use of perhaps unremarkable material rather than for a stereotyped rehearsal of memorised information.

- (b) Examiners should use these banding definitions in combination with the paper-specific mark schemes.
- (c) It should go without saying that any explanation or judgement is strengthened if informed by the use of source material.
- (d) Examiners are also asked to bear in mind, when reading the following, that analysis sufficient for a mark in the highest band may perfectly legitimately be deployed within a chronological framework. Candidates who eschew an explicitly analytical response may well yet be able, by virtue of the very intelligence and pointedness of their selection of elements for a well sustained and well grounded account, to provide sufficient implicit analysis to justify a Band 2 mark.
- (e) The band in which an essay is placed depends on a range of criteria. As a result, not all essays fall obviously into one particular band. In such cases a ‘best-fit’ approach should be adopted with any doubt erring on the side of generosity.
- (f) In marking an essay, examiners should first place it in a band and then fine-tune the mark in terms of how strongly/weakly the demands of the band have been met.

Band 1: 25–30

The answer will be sharply analytical in approach and strongly argued. It will show that the demands of the question have been fully understood and that a conscious and sustained attempt has been made to respond to them in appropriate range and depth. It will be coherent and structured with a clear sense of direction. The focus will be sharp and persistent. Some lack of balance, in that certain aspects are covered less fully or certain arguments deployed less strongly than others, need not preclude a mark in this band. The material will be wide-ranging and handled with the utmost confidence and a high degree of maturity. Historical explanations will be invariably clear, sharp and well developed and historical concepts fully understood. Where appropriate, there will be conscious and successful attempts to engage with the historiography, to evaluate source material critically and to demonstrate an awareness of competing interpretations. Use of English will be clear and fluent with excellent vocabulary and virtually error-free.

Such answers may be expected, where appropriate, to make use of relevant primary sources. Nevertheless, where the answer is strong in all or most of the other criteria for this band, limited or no use of such sources should not preclude it from being placed in this band.

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Band 2: 19–24

The answer will be characterised by an analytical and argued approach, although there may be the occasional passage which does not go beyond description or narrative. It will show that the demands of the question have been very well understood and that a determined attempt has been made to respond to them in appropriate range and depth. The essay will be coherent and clearly structured and its judgements will be effectively supported by accurate and relevant material. Some lack of rigour in the argument and occasional blurred focus may be allowed. Where appropriate, there will be a conscious and largely successful attempt to engage with the historiography, to evaluate source material and to demonstrate an awareness of competing interpretations. The material will be wide-ranging, fully understood, confidently deployed and well controlled with high standards of accuracy. Historical explanations will be clear and well developed and there will be a sound understanding of historical concepts and vocabulary. Use of English will be highly competent, clear, generally fluent and largely error-free.

Such answers may be expected, where appropriate, to make use of or refer to at least some relevant primary sources. Nevertheless, where the answer is strong in all or most of the criteria for this Band, very limited or no use of these sources should not preclude it from being placed in this band.

Band 3: 13–18

The answer will attempt an analytical approach, although there will be passages which do not go beyond description or narrative. It will show that the demands of the question have been understood, at least in large part, and that a conscious attempt has been made to respond to them. There will be an effective focus on the terms of the question and, although in places this may break down, standards of relevance will be generally high. Although it may not be sustained throughout the answer, or always fully supported, there will be a recognisable sense of argument. The material will be clearly understood, with a good range, and organisation will be sound. There will be a conscious attempt to draw conclusions and form judgements and these will be adequately supported. Some understanding of differing and competing interpretations is to be expected and some evaluation of sources may be attempted but probably not in a very sophisticated form. Historical explanations and the use of historical concepts and vocabulary will be generally sound but some lack of understanding is to be expected. Use of English will be competent, clear and largely free of serious errors.

Use of relevant primary sources is a possibility. Candidates should be credited for having used such sources rather than penalised for not having done so.

Band 4: 7–12

The answer may contain some analysis but descriptive or narrative material will predominate. The essay will show that the demands of the question have been understood, at least in good part, and that some attempt has been made to respond to them. It will be generally coherent with a fair sense of organisation. Focus on the exact terms of the question is likely to be uneven and there will be a measure of irrelevance. There will be some inaccuracies in knowledge, and the range may well be limited with some gaps. Understanding of the material will be generally sound, although there will be some lack of tautness and precision. Explanations will be generally clear, although not always convincing or well developed. Some attempt at argument is to be expected but it will lack sufficient support in places and sense of direction may not always be clear. There may be some awareness of differing interpretations and some attempt at evaluating source material, but this is not generally to be expected at this level and such skills, where deployed, will be unsophisticated. Some errors of English will be present but written style should be clear, although lacking in real fluency.

Use of or reference to relevant primary sources is unlikely at this level but credit should be given where it does appear.

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Band 5: 0–6

The answers will respond in some measure to the demands of the question but will be very limited in meeting these. Analysis, if it appears at all, will be brief and undeveloped. If an argument is attempted it will be lacking in real coherence, sense of direction, support and rigour. Focus on the exact terms of the question is likely to be very uneven; unsupported generalisations, vagueness and irrelevance are all likely to be on show. Historical knowledge, concepts and vocabulary will be insufficiently understood and there will be inaccuracies. Explanations may be attempted but will be halting and unclear. Where judgements are made they will be largely unsubstantiated, whilst investigation of historical problems will be very elementary. Awareness of differing interpretations and the evaluation of sources is not to be expected. The answer may well be fragmentary, slight and even unfinished. Significant errors of spelling, grammar, punctuation and syntax may well hamper a proper understanding of the script.

Use of or reference to relevant primary sources is highly unlikely at this level but credit should be given where it does appear.

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1 (a) How far are the views about the Education Bill given in Document B corroborated by Document C? [10]

The answer should make full use of both documents and should be sharply aware of both similarities and differences. Real comparisons of themes and issues should be made across the documents rather than by separate treatment. Where appropriate, the answer should demonstrate a strong sense of critical evaluation and awareness of provenance by use, not only of the text but of headings and attributions.

Similarities – **B** sees it as acceptable, a measure of progress and reform and has faith in its principle. **C** is also in favour but more fulsomely ('I thank God'), the measure is admirable and will lead to further progress

Differences – These concern the role of the School Boards. There are two issues here – the nature of religious instruction and the responsibility for making attendance compulsory. **B** is concerned that the nonconformist interest will be undermined as the Boards may be dominated by Anglicans. **C** does not see the religious problem as great and assumes that Christian instruction will be generally desired. **C** also considers that the School Boards will take on the responsibility, guided by public opinion, of ensuring compulsory attendance.

Provenance – Though members of the same party and speaking in the same debate, the two MPs show the divide in the party. The key is the link between Dixon and the Birmingham-based National Education League, eager for secular education and a national and uniform system because of the prevalence of Church of England schools. The other view reflects the Liberal desire to rely on local institutions and assume that progress will occur. Given the very strong feelings of the Nonconformists, it might be that the two sources show more disagreement than might appear.

(b) How convincing is the evidence presented by these documents for the view that, in the years c.1866–80, Gladstone's political ideas shaped the Liberals as a united party of progress? [20]

The answer should treat the documents as a set and make effective use of each, although, depending on the exact form of the question, not necessarily in the same detail. It should be clear that the demands of the question have been fully understood and the material should be handled confidently and with a strong sense of argument and analysis. Good use of supporting contextual knowledge should be demonstrated. The material deployed should be strong both in range and depth. Critical evaluation of the documents is to be expected. The argument should be well constructed. Historical concepts and vocabulary should be fully understood. Where appropriate, an understanding and evaluation of differing historical interpretations is to be expected.

The key elements in the question are how far the Liberals were united by Gladstone's ideas and how far those ideas were progressive in themselves and led to a progressive party. **A** suggests 'progress' in the sense of understanding the need for greater working class representation. Its rhetoric suggests Gladstone leading the united people behind the great social forces of progress. However, not all Liberals shared the view or admired the manner in which it was proclaimed. Responses may note that the arguments have less to do with democratic rights *per se* but focus on the working class taking on the duties of citizenship and their income. **B** and **C** concern progress in giving the working classes access to educational opportunity. This is in accordance with liberal ideas of greater freedom and encouraging self-reliance through education.

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However, the failure to embrace calls for a totally new national and secular system rather than bolting on new Board Schools in areas where there was no existing provision and the failure to provide for compulsory education nationally question the progressive nature of the party, and the different opinions in the debate between the Liberal MPs question their unity. The role of the non-conformists within Liberalism and their discontents could be explored here.

There is also the issue of the unresolved conflict between local and national responsibilities and concerns about the cost of progressive legislation. **D** shows Gladstone has moved on from the arguments of 1866 in **A** and now there is talk of ‘the nation’ whose interests have been apparently so neglected by Disraeli’s government. This is a view that could be challenged, given the limitations of the 1868–74 reforms to engage with the practical needs of the nation and, for all their faults, the more pragmatic legislation of the Conservatives. The Midlothian Campaign and its visionary rhetoric was progressive in its aspirations, but some may see it as somewhat lacking in practical application when Gladstone resumed power after 1880 and not uniting all the Liberal party behind it. A more jaundiced view is offered by **E**. It offers some support for the progressive nature of Gladstone’s pure ideas, but is sceptical about how genuinely progressive the party and its leader were in promoting working class interests rather than simply pleasing the aspirant middle class and how united the party was. The judgement that many saw him as a concealed Tory might be supported by growing radical restlessness about the gap between the rhetoric of **D** and the reality of policies dominated by fiscal conservatism and unwillingness to extend the power of the state to encompass pursuit of the reduction of inequality.

2 What best explains why a minority Conservative government was able in 1867 to enact a major parliamentary reform? [30]

Candidates should:

AO1—present a response to the question which displays accurate and relevant historical knowledge of circumstances of 1867 and, particularly, of the arrangements and negotiations which led to the passage of the Second Reform Act. Specifically, they are likely to discuss Disraeli’s role in the minority Derby government of 1866–68. As Chancellor of the Exchequer, he took the lead in driving a reform bill through Parliament. A sharp focus on the demands of the question is required. The question’s focus requires an understanding of the government’s motivation, specifically perhaps Disraeli’s determination to show that a minority Conservative government could succeed where a majority Liberal one had recently failed. Responses may point out that most Liberal MPs were in favour of some kind of parliamentary reform, although their deep, and often principled, disagreements about how extensive the reform should be had led to the collapse of their government.

Responses are likely to discuss Disraeli’s tactics, which included accepting many amendments to the Conservatives’ original proposals so long as they were not proposed by the Liberal leadership. Candidates may also know about Derby and Disraeli’s willingness to take risks – not least about the assumed ‘threat’ which a much larger electorate might present – to achieve a Conservative Reform Act. Detailed knowledge of the terms of the Act is not required, although some responses might note the significance its creation of three-member constituencies in large cities with electors able to vote for only two.

AO2—be able to demonstrate an understanding and awareness of historical concepts, enabling them to present clear, focused and analytical explanations which are capable of weighing up the relevant and relative factors and approaches, and of arriving at a well considered judgement. Here, the focus is on reaching a judgement about the reasons for Derby and Disraeli’s success in steering a Conservative reform bill through Parliament. Good responses will identify a range of

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reasons and will appreciate the force of ‘best explains’ in requiring adjudication of the relative merits of different factors.

Here, these include: a House of Commons in which there was a majority for the principle of reform; Disraeli’s flexibility in accepting changes to the original bill; his clear-sightedness about the ultimate objective – a Conservative Reform Act with no absolute commitments on details; Derby’s support (however reluctant) for a reform measure; the perception outside Parliament that failure to effect reform would be unpopular and might have adverse political or social consequences.

Weaker responses are likely to concentrate more or less exclusively on Disraeli and will present limited and/or unspecific evidence about his role. Probably concentrating on the factors identified in AO1 above, stronger responses will deploy a wider range of arguments and may discuss the wider context within which parliamentary reform was being debated during 1867. They will appreciate that the injunction to argue what ‘best explains’ requires making judgements about the relative importance of several linked factors.

Attempts to deal with historiography and differing historical interpretations may well enhance responses but are not required. Here, some responses may discuss the debates about Disraeli’s management of the House of Commons during 1867 and the greater recent examination of Derby’s contribution to the passage of the Act.

AO3 – [not applicable to Special Subjects]

AO4 – write in a coherent, structured and effective way. The writing should show a sense both of organisation and direction, displaying clarity, balance and – especially in stronger responses – fluency. Responses will not be explicitly penalised for specific deficiencies in spelling, punctuation and grammar. However, the cumulative effective of substantial problems in this area will inevitably influence judgements concerning the overall clarity and effectiveness of the presentation.

3 ‘The evidence from his ministry of 1874–80 clearly shows that Disraeli’s domestic policies were both limited in design and ineffective in execution.’ Discuss. [30]

Candidates should:

AO1 – present a response to the question which displays accurate and relevant historical knowledge about the domestic policies of Disraeli’s 1874–80 government. A sharp focus on the demands of the question is required. Here, the focus requires an understanding of Disraeli’s ideas about Conservative domestic policy as worked out during these years. Responses are likely to include information about domestic legislation which was passed, including: the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act (1875); the Public Health and Artisans’ and Labourers’ Dwellings Acts (1875); the Sale of Food and Drugs Acts; the Sandon Education Act (1876). Disraeli also had ideas about domestic economic policy and the continuing battle to restrict government expenditure. Responses are likely to include the work and priorities of Richard Cross since, as Home Secretary, he piloted most of the best-known Tory ‘social’ legislation through the Commons. Responses are also likely to discuss Stafford Northcote’s attempts as Chancellor of the Exchequer to restrict government expenditure and to keep taxes low. Both Cross and Northcote held their offices throughout the administration.

AO2 – be able to demonstrate an understanding and awareness of historical concepts, enabling them to present clear, focused and analytical explanations which are capable of weighing up the relevant and relative factors and approaches, and of arriving at a well considered judgement. Here, the focus is on reaching a judgment about whether Tory domestic policy in these years was

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both limited in design and ineffective in execution. Most responses are likely to note both that most of the so-called ‘domestic’ legislation was carried out in the first two years of the administration and that Disraeli was more concerned about such legislation’s political, rather than its social, impact, especially with new working-class voters.

Those sympathetic to the quotation which frames the question are likely to argue that Disraeli had little interest in the specific details of social legislation. This perception might lead some to argue that Disraeli’s ideas on domestic legislation did not advance far beyond the need to make what had originally been Liberal initiatives work better and be more politically palatable. And on this, they might argue, Cross, rather than Disraeli, was the prime mover. Some will suggest that the reforms were effectively executed, though not by Disraeli.

Strong responses may argue that Disraeli’s legislation had only limited range. Some, in effect, amended Liberal legislation, perhaps in some cases for the sake of it. On the other hand, amendments were increasingly felt to be necessary, not for party reasons, but in the light of practical experience suggesting that earlier legislation was proving ineffective. Cross famously expressed surprise at Disraeli’s lack of detailed knowledge, particularly of ‘the social question’. Many will argue that Disraeli left detail to others, especially once his attention became steadily fixed on the Eastern Question from 1876 onwards. Similarly, the details of economic policy remained firmly the responsibility of Stafford Northcote, although Disraeli famously refused to re-introduce protection to a hard-pressed arable sector.

Some good responses will argue that Disraeli believed in ministers managing their own portfolios, and that his ideas about ‘Bread’ as well as ‘Circuses’ were sufficiently influential to ensure that the key domestic issues reflected his overall ideas on how to make the Conservatives regularly electable in the new political world after 1867. Also, the administration of domestic policy was generally efficient. Cross’s eye for detail and his ability to learn from experience ensured that few domestic policies in these years were ‘ineffective’. On this reading, Disraeli was right to trust him while his mind was increasingly absorbed by foreign matters. In any case, Disraeli’s authority in the party was little challenged over domestic matters.

It is also possible to suggest that he was always alert to sniffing out policy options which were popular with the expanded electorate. Unsurprisingly, most of the 1872 Liberal Licensing Act was repealed in 1874, almost as soon as Disraeli took office. Likewise, his policy on trade unions (permitting peaceful picketing, etc.) exploited opportunities which the Liberals’ own trade union legislation had presented to him. On this reading, therefore, Disraeli was as much in charge of domestic policy as he needed to be and not at all ‘ineffective’. Some candidates might argue that the concept of a ‘domestic policy’ (at least as an integrated entity) is anachronistic. Most of the key developments still happened locally, rather than at Westminster.

Weaker responses are likely to assert, with some evidence, that Disraeli was relatively uninterested in domestic matters. They will present only limited and/or under-developed evidence about Disraeli’s ideas about domestic policy. Good responses will offer a wider range of arguments about Disraeli’s engagement with domestic legislation and will present more specific and detailed evidence in support of an answer which deals with both ‘limited’ and ‘ineffective’.

Attempts to deal with historiography and differing historical interpretations may well enhance responses but are not required. Here, some responses will demonstrate awareness of debates on Disraeli’s engagement with domestic policy and the extent to which he left policy formulation in this area to others.

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AO3 – [not applicable to Special Subjects]

AO4 – write in a coherent, structured and effective way. The writing should show a sense both of organisation and direction, displaying clarity, balance and – especially in stronger responses – fluency. Responses will not be explicitly penalised for specific deficiencies in spelling, punctuation and grammar. However, the cumulative effect of substantial problems in this area will inevitably influence judgements concerning the overall clarity and effectiveness of the presentation.

4 ‘The electoral reforms of 1884–85 were the most significant achievement of Gladstone’s ministry of 1880–85.’ Discuss. [30]

Candidates should:

AO1 – present a response to the question which displays accurate and relevant historical knowledge specifically on the terms both of the Third Reform Act (1884) and the Redistribution Act (1885), and more generally about the second Gladstone administration. A sharp focus on the demands of the question is required. Here, this involves both knowledge and understanding of the relative significance of parliamentary reform alongside other developments which might be considered as ‘achievements’ of the second Gladstone government. Responses are likely to discuss the key features of the relevant electoral reforms: the 1884 Act equalised franchise qualifications in boroughs and counties, and candidates should also know that the key franchise qualifications related to the voting rights of householders and lodgers. The Act enfranchised about 2.6m new voters more than the Reform Acts of 1867–68. The number of voters in Ireland trebled, which had significance for the Home Rule campaign.

In respect of 1885, responses are likely to note that the redistribution of seats was extensive. Almost a quarter of the pre–1885 seats disappeared and 79 towns in England and Wales with populations less than 15,000 were completely disfranchised. Most of the disfranchised seats were redistributed as additional seats for the counties and to the growing suburban areas. A number of one-member constituencies were created for smaller towns, most of which were semi-rural and market towns.

Other key developments during the second Gladstone government on which candidates may wish to draw in order to make a judgement of relative importance include: the Peace Preservation and Second Irish Land Acts (both 1881); Married Women’s Property Act (1882); Corrupt and Illegal Practices Prevention Act (1883); attempts to reduce government expenditure and linked taxation policies (level of income tax reduced). In foreign affairs, the key developments are: the First Boer War (1881) and the continuance of British rule in South Africa; intervention in Egypt (1882) leading to what was in effect British rule; handling of the Mahdi rebellion, the attempt to retain Khartoum and the death of Gordon.

AO2 – be able to demonstrate an understanding and awareness of historical concepts, enabling them to present clear, focused and analytical explanations which are capable of weighing up the relevant and relative factors and approaches, and of arriving at a well considered judgement. Here, the focus is on reaching a judgment about the relative importance of the electoral changes of 1884–85. Most responses are likely to make use of a selection of the evidence indicated in AO1 above, although particular attention to Reform and Redistribution is required to sustain the appropriate analytical focus. Most candidates are likely to argue that parliamentary reforms did represent the administration’s most significant achievement, although some may argue legislation on corrupt electoral practices was at least as important.

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In terms of relative importance, many candidates are likely to give most attention to Irish policy, though probably to argue that, especially in the light of the Phoenix Park murders of 1882, the ministry achieved little. Other candidates might argue that this ministry was important as a prelude to the ‘Scramble for Africa’ and that, despite Gladstone’s assertion that he supported the Empire while opposing Imperialism, what proved to be long-term control over Egypt represented the acquisition of a substantial economic and strategic resource and should be seen as an early development in the Scramble. As such, they might argue, this was a more substantial (and certainly a more high-profile) achievement than electoral changes. Some able candidates might make a distinction between ‘changes’ and ‘achievements’, particularly if they argue that the prelude to the Scramble was very important but does not deserve to be seen as an ‘achievement’. Other able candidates might seek to play down the ‘achievement’ element of 1884–85 by noting the extent to which the reforms had very substantial cross-party support.

Weaker responses may concentrate more or less exclusively on parliamentary reforms, thus failing to appreciate that a judgement of relative ‘achievement’ lies at the heart of the question. Many weaker candidates will have only sketchy knowledge and understanding of the details, or even the purposes, of parliamentary reform and redistribution.

Attempts to deal with historiography and differing historical interpretations may well enhance responses, but are not required. Here, some candidates may make use of recent debates about the significance of 1884–85 and may in consequence argue that the Acts represented at least as significant a change as did the Second Reform Act of 1867.

AO3 – [not applicable to Special Subjects]

AO4 – write in a coherent, structured and effective way. The writing should show a sense of both organisation and direction, displaying clarity, balance and – especially in stronger responses – fluency. Responses will not be explicitly penalised for specific deficiencies in spelling, punctuation and grammar. However, the cumulative effect of substantial problems in this area will inevitably influence judgements concerning the overall clarity and effectiveness of the presentation.