

Skill Codes that are being used in *History* to assess essays

| What the codes mean... | What you can do to improve... |
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| QF Question Focus Some sections are descriptive and lack question focus (links between the material and the question are largely implicit). | Read the question several times very carefully. Rephrase it in your own words to ensure that you have fully grasped its implications. Highlight the key target words to which you must respond, to help you remain focused upon them. Think very carefully about the opening and closing sentences of your paragraphs. Is there a clear signpost/argument at the start and a strong link to the question at the end? |
| NR Not Relevant Identified sections are not relevant to the question. | Review your work carefully; cut sections that do not link to the question and evaluate/explain/support arguments. |
| EG Examples Arguments are not well supported by an appropriate range and depth of accurate and well-selected factual material. | Revise relevant, specific examples that will help you prove an argument. Select examples carefully and deploy them to support an argument. |
| O Organisation Your essay has organisational problems: e.g., you present information in a haphazard fashion in which there is no attempt to link ideas together in coherent paragraphs. | Have you moved from topic to topic, from argument to argument, in a logical manner that will not confuse and bewilder your imaginary reader? Do you need to rewrite your essay, to rearrange material, so that you can present your argument more effectively? |
| FE Factual Errors There are some important factual errors in the essay. It reveals limited or faulty knowledge and poor understanding of technical terms and key words. | Note carefully the errors highlighted in the essay. Re-read class notes and relevant textbooks dealing with the topic in question. Complete or correct notes that relate to this topic. Seek further help—ask for a session at lunchtime or after school to review the content. |
| SPG Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar Your essay contains a number of important spelling errors of technical terms and may lose you marks. | Study common spelling errors and practise writing them out repeatedly so you learn to spell them correctly—especially if they include technical words that the examiner will expect you to know. This will help you build up your “sight vocabulary”. |
| NC Not Clear Written expression needs some attention: e.g., your sentences miss things; sentences are ambiguous; you jump from one idea to another in a confusing manner. | Re-read what you have written very self-critically. Have you expressed yourself clearly? Look carefully at what you have actually written—not what you think you have written. Will someone else understand what you have written? |
| ND Not Developed There is inadequate development of arguments and critical points: e.g., you have not spent enough time building up a persuasive line of argument. | Think carefully about using connectives that prove impact, e.g., “this meant that...”, “this resulted in...”, “this led to...”, “without...” |
| EV Evaluation of evidence You need to critically evaluate the extent to which the evidence supports an argument. | This requires the value/weight of the evidence to be discussed rather than just a list of the evidence itself. |
| ICE Interpretations Critically Evaluated You need to consider the extent to which the evidence supports key historical interpretations. | Look carefully at corrections made by me to your sentences. Practise writing sentences correctly that cover the areas that you know from experience you find challenging and confusing. Ask me for punctuation and grammar exercises if you want further help. |

| Level | Mark | Grade | Positive Features | Negative Features |
|-------|-------|-------|---|---|
| 5 | 25-30 | A/A* | <p>QF a sustained analytical answer (i.e., present from the introduction to the conclusion) that shows a detailed understanding of the key issues and supports/rejects/modifies the statement in the question.</p> <p>EG All arguments are very well supported by an appropriate range and depth of accurate and well-selected factual material.</p> <p>EV the overall argument is based on sustained critical evaluation of the evidence. This requires the value/weight of the evidence to be discussed rather than just a list of the evidence itself.</p> <p>ICE Interpretations are critically evaluated (in light of the weight of evidence to support them) where appropriate.</p> | <p>SPG occasional syntactical and/or spelling errors BUT ... they will not impede coherent deployment of the material and argument.</p> |
| 4 | 19-24 | B/A | <p>QF an analytical answer that shows a clear understanding of the focus of the question and the key issues.</p> <p>EG Detailed and relevant knowledge used to support arguments</p> <p>EV Some attempt to evaluate the evidence for an argument and draw out the key points (prioritises and links)</p> <p>O Good organisation — well structured with good paragraphing.</p> <p>WW A clear, coherent, well-written, convincing account.</p> | <p>QF There may be a slight drift from the question in some places</p> <p>ND some points are dealt with too briefly and some explanations lack real depth</p> <p>SPG occasional syntactical and/or spelling errors</p> |
| 3 | 13-18 | D/C | <p>QF Broadly analytical — the answer shows an overall understanding of the question</p> <p>EG arguments are supported by examples</p> <p>O the answer shows some degree of organisation, direction and control</p> | <p>QF some sections are descriptive and lack question focus (links between the material and the question are largely implicit)</p> <p>NR some sections are not relevant</p> <p>EG Some sections lack a range of examples to support arguments</p> <p>ND some points are not developed</p> <p>NC some passages lack clarity</p> <p>FE there are some important factual errors</p> <p>SPG some syntactical and/or spelling errors</p> |
| 2 | 7-12 | E | <p>Some relevant material</p> <p>Some points are developed and supported by clear explanations</p> | <p>QF material is not linked to the question</p> <p>EG Limited range of examples to support arguments</p> <p>ND important points are not developed in enough detail</p> <p>O the structure is weak and lacks coherence</p> <p>FE There are a number of factual errors and poor understanding of technical terms and key words.</p> <p>SPG frequent syntactical and/or spelling errors</p> |
| 1 | 1-6 | U | | |