

## Key Question 2: Why did William win the Battle of Hastings?

These assessment notes are designed to support the teaching of the Norman Conquest unit. At the end of the unit, students will need to answer a causation question: "Why did William win the Battle of Hastings?" In addressing this question, students will need to draw on a range of knowledge from the battle itself as well as in the period leading to the battle. They may bring in wider knowledge of tactics studied in other periods.

### Key Knowledge to develop

Edward the Confessor's death and the issue of succession; the relationship between the main contenders to the throne including Harold Godwinson, Harald Hardrada and William of Normandy; William's intention to invade; Harald Hardrada and the invasion of the North; Harold's victory at Stamford Bridge; the changing weather conditions and William's landing at Pevensey; the makeup of the Norman army compared to the English army; Harold's march south; Harold's tactics on the morning of the battle – the shield wall and the command of Senlac Hill; William's use of the papal insignia; William demonstrating he was not killed; William's tactic of retreating to draw the Saxons from the hill; the effectiveness of the Norman cavalry and archers on flat ground; the death and mutilation of Harold Godwinson.

### *Aims*

The main aim of this assessment is to develop students' knowledge of the Battle of Hastings, alongside their understanding of historical causation. By the end of the enquiry, students should be able to identify a range of causes for William's victory at Hastings. They should also be able to categorise these causes, as well as noting potential links between them. Students will also be asked to communicate their ideas about William's victory in a structured way.

### *Assessment*

Students should conclude their enquiry in a written, essay-style format with an introduction, paragraphs and a conclusion.

### *Marking*

Assessments such as this give students good opportunities to weave reasonable analyses of events, both medium and short-term, leading to William's victory. Some common misconceptions for this kind of assessment are given below. These may be useful when writing student feedback.

	<b>Low Pass</b>
A minority of students	<p>Students at this level will tend to produce work which contains limited knowledge of the actions of William or of the events leading up to or during the Battle. Knowledge will be asserted where available and there may be inaccuracies in the knowledge given. In other cases, the knowledge used may be generic rather than specific eg. William played a trick on Harold...</p> <p>The structure will tend to be narrative. Command of language will be weak.</p>
	<b>Pass</b>
Some students	<p>Students at this level will show at least some knowledge of actions taken during the Battle of Hastings. Students may well give descriptions of the actions of William or the failures of Harold with some supporting detail. Knowledge will be relevant and accurate for the most part. They may also show some outline knowledge of the context of the battle.</p> <p>The structure will still tend towards narrative, although some paragraphing may be evident thanks to the planning frame. Links back to the question will be implicit at best. There will be some evidence that the student understands at least the main outlines of the Battle of Hastings.</p>
	<b>Merit</b>
The vast majority of students	<p>Students at this level will have a good understanding of the main events of the battle including some specific detail on the actions of William and of other factors leading to the victory. Evidence will be chosen to answer the question and there will be signs that there is a rationale to the choice of evidence. The accuracy of evidence will be generally good. There may be a stronger sense that students understand the context of the battle.</p> <p>There will be a logical structure to the work, with key topics forming paragraphs and some conclusion, even if only short, being arrived at. The explanations given in paragraphs may still be implicit in their links to the question, however the conclusion will make an attempt to provide a direct answer to the question. Command of language will be adequate.</p>
	<b>Distinction</b>
A minority of students	<p>Students at this level will tend to show a very good understanding of the battle - including specific details of the different contributing factors to William's victory. There will be a rationale evident for the choice of evidence which will be deployed in a way which helps their argument. Analysis of this evidence may still lack depth however there will be obvious attempts to use the evidence to directly answer the question.</p> <p>The structure of the essay will be largely analytical with a focus on the question which is sustained for the majority of the time. The account will show a deliberate engagement with the question and the conclusion will show an independent reflection on the question itself. At this level, students may also begin to consider the impact of different causes and see links between them. Command of language will be good.</p>
	<b>Starred Distinction</b>
Exceptionally rare	<p>Student at this level produce a sustained and well-focused answer which is analytical. The answer will use a range of specific and accurate evidence to explore the importance of different factors in leading to William's victory. There may still be some limitations to the analysis but the conclusions will demonstrate clear, justifiable and independent thinking and a good command of language.</p>