**Some ideas to help with the title:**

**To what extent does Northumberland deserve the moniker ‘the Bad Duke’? Discuss (25 marks)**

**Duke of Northumberland**:

Positive Policies/Actions/Events:

* He appointed himself as Lord President of the Council rather than Lord Protector.
* The policy of Scottish Garrisons was abandoned
* The council was remodeled by Paget- so that it worked as a more united body
* Efforts were made to reduce food prices and to improve funds for poor relief
* In 1550 Northumberland negotiated the return of Boulogne to the French in exchange for a lump sum of 400 crowns
* From 1550 there was peace with France - Edward agreed to a betrothal to a French princess
* Gresham was sent to the Netherlands to negotiate with the Flemish cloth traders and foreign bankers. He met with some success.
* In 1552 the council established a commission to investigate the revenue system.
* In March 1552 the coinage was called in and reminted at its 1527 value, thus putting an end to the debasement of the coinage, and going some way to combating inflation.
* He repealed the tax on sheep.
* He reduced spending on foreign policy.
* Under his direction Cecil and Mildmay greatly reduced crown debts. **In his three and a bit years in office he managed to reduce the crown's debt from £260 000 to £180 000.**

**Fall**

* David Loades writes, **"Northumberland was defeated by a cruel twist of fate."** Others would argue that he fell because of his unrealistic ambition.
* In 1553 it became obvious that the king was dying. No one had seen it coming; the king was only a couple of years off his majority. Northumberland had become increasingly unpopular at court in his attempts to secure the king's favour.
* Edward had made provisions for his death in January 1553. In his 'devise' he ignored statute law (Henry VIII's will) and instead he formulated his own succession policy. The crown should pass down the Brandon side of the Tudor family in the event of his death. This made the heir to the throne, Edward's cousin, Frances Grey. Loades would argue that this piece of legislation was the sole work of Edward, but there are many others who see the hands of Northumberland and Cranmer at work.
* However, when Edward was very ill the 'devise' was changed in favour of Frances Grey's daughter, Jane Grey, who just happened to be married to Northumberland's son, Guildford Dudley. To be fair there were a number of reasons why Edward would have wished for her to succeed him: she was Protestant, she shared the same schooling as he did, she was a good friend, and she was married to an English nobleman.
* Thus when Edward died in the evening of 6th July 1553, Jane Grey was proclaimed Queen of England. The council was mute on the matter. After all, it was treason to question the king's decision. But Mary was on the move. She had the full support of the East Anglian gentry (although only one nobleman backed her). She proclaimed herself Queen at Framlington Castle. Northumberland had a decision to make, and he had to make it fast. Should he declare for the Queen in London, or stand for Jane Grey and march troops up to Suffolk? On the 14th July he marched 2 000 men to Suffolk, but they deserted him en route.
* The Privy Council declared for Mary, and Northumberland was arrested in Cambridge. He was executed on 22nd August 1553 along with his son and his unfortunate daughter-in-law.

**Historiography**

* In the past Northumberland has had a poor press. He has, traditionally, been seen as the 'Evil Duke' (cf. Somerset as the 'Good Duke'). However, **Dale Hoak** in his Rehabilitation of the Duke of Northumberland has done a lot to remedy this.
* **Nigel Heard** has a balanced view: "While Northumberland did little to resolve the underlying economic problems, he did check inflation, and ease the worse of the social distress."
* **Lotherington:** "a genuine and able reformer"
* **Nevertheless, he still is the man that historians love to hate:**
* **Jennifer Loach** maintained that he was 'greedy' and 'ambitious'.
* **WRD Jones** has him as a devious plotter of plots and counter-coups.