



**General Certificate of Education  
June 2012**

**AS History 1041**

**HIS2L**

**Unit 2L**

**The Impact of Stalin's Leadership in the  
USSR, 1924–1941**

**Final**

***Mark Scheme***

Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all examiners participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each examiner analyses a number of students' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

Further copies of this Mark Scheme are available to download from the AQA Website: [www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk)

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## **Generic Introduction for AS**

The AS History specification is based on the assessment objectives laid down in QCA's GCE History subject criteria and published in the AQA specification booklet. These cover the skills, knowledge and understanding which are expected of A Level students. Most questions address more than one objective since historical skills, which include knowledge and understanding, are usually deployed together. Consequently, the marking scheme which follows is a 'levels of response' scheme and assesses students' historical skills in the context of their knowledge and understanding of History.

The levels of response are a graduated recognition of how students have demonstrated their abilities in the Assessment Objectives. Students who predominantly address AO1(a) by writing narrative or description will perform at Level 1 or Level 2 depending on its relevance. Students who provide more explanation – (AO1(b), supported by the relevant selection of material, AO1(a)) – will perform at high Level 2 or low-mid Level 3 depending on how explicit they are in their response to the question. Students who provide explanation with evaluation, judgement and an awareness of historical interpretations will be addressing all 3 AOs (AO1(a); AO1(b): AO2(a) and (b) and will have access to the higher mark ranges. AO2(a) which requires the evaluation of source material is assessed in Unit 2.

Differentiation between Levels 3, 4 and 5 is judged according to the extent to which students meet this range of assessment objectives. At Level 3 the answers will show more characteristics of the AO1 objectives, although there should be elements of AO2. At Level 4, AO2 criteria, particularly an understanding of how the past has been interpreted, will be more in evidence and this will be even more dominant at Level 5. The demands on written communication, particularly the organisation of ideas and the use of specialist vocabulary also increase through the various levels so that a student performing at the highest AS level is already well prepared for the demands of A2.

**CRITERIA FOR MARKING GCE HISTORY:****AS EXAMINATION PAPERS****General Guidance for Examiners (to accompany Level Descriptors)**

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**Deciding on a level and the award of marks within a level**

It is of vital importance that examiners familiarise themselves with the generic mark scheme and apply it consistently, as directed by the Principal Examiner, in order to facilitate comparability across options.

The indicative mark scheme for each paper is designed to illustrate some of the material that students might refer to (knowledge) and some of the approaches and ideas they might develop (skills). It is not, however, prescriptive and should only be used to exemplify the generic mark scheme.

When applying the generic mark scheme, examiners will constantly need to exercise judgement to decide which level fits an answer best. Few essays will display all the characteristics of a level, so deciding the most appropriate will always be the first task.

Each level has a range of marks and for an essay which has a strong correlation with the level descriptors the middle mark should be given. However, when an answer has some of the characteristics of the level above or below, or seems stronger or weaker on comparison with many other students' responses to the same question, the mark will need to be adjusted up or down.

When deciding on the mark within a level, the following criteria should be considered *in relation to the level descriptors*. Students should never be doubly penalised. If a student with poor communication skills has been placed in Level 2, he or she should not be moved to the bottom of the level on the basis of the poor quality of written communication. On the other hand, a student with similarly poor skills, whose work otherwise matched the criteria for Level 4 should be adjusted downwards within the level.

Criteria for deciding marks within a level:

- The accuracy of factual information
- The level of detail
- The depth and precision displayed
- The quality of links and arguments
- The quality of written communication (grammar, spelling, punctuation and legibility; an appropriate form and style of writing; clear and coherent organisation of ideas, including the use of specialist vocabulary)
- Appropriate references to historical interpretation and debate
- The conclusion

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June 2012

**GCE AS History Unit 2: Historical Issues: Periods of Change**

**HIS2L: The Impact of Stalin's Leadership in the USSR, 1924–1941**

**Question 1**

**01** Use **Sources A** and **B** and your own knowledge.

Explain how far the views in **Source B** differ from those in **Source A** in relation to the First Five-Year Plan in the USSR. (12 marks)

*Target: AO2(a)*

**Levels Mark Scheme**

	Nothing written worthy of credit.	<b>0</b>
<b>L1:</b>	Answers will <b>either</b> briefly paraphrase/describe the content of the two sources <b>or</b> identify simple comparison(s) between the sources. Skills of written communication will be weak.	<b>1-2</b>
<b>L2:</b>	Responses will compare the views expressed in the two sources and identify some differences and/or similarities. There may be some limited own knowledge. Answers will be coherent but weakly expressed.	<b>3-6</b>
<b>L3:</b>	Responses will compare the views expressed in the two sources, identifying differences <b>and</b> similarities and using own knowledge to explain and evaluate these. Answers will, for the most part, be clearly expressed.	<b>7-9</b>
<b>L4:</b>	Responses will make a developed comparison between the views expressed in the two sources and will apply own knowledge to evaluate and to demonstrate a good contextual understanding. Answers will, for the most part, show good skills of written communication.	<b>10-12</b>

**Indicative content**

**Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the levels scheme.**

Students will need to identify differences between the views of the two sources. For example:

- Source A refers to the Plan as a 'great victory' and a complete triumph, whereas Source B uses words like 'demoralisation'
- Source A describes specific increases in production, whereas Source B refers to failures such as 'lost output' and 'wasted investments'
- Source A refers to a strengthening of the working class, whereas Source B refers to various losers, including members of the working class who tried to escape the impact of the Plan.

Students will need to apply their own knowledge of context to explain these differences. They might, for example, refer to:

- the fact that there were considerable increases in production, mostly in capital goods, but the quality was often lacking and everything was geared to quantitative targets, so there were also drawbacks such as reduced efficiency and waste
- It is true that economic expansion provided many opportunities for proletarians to gain promotion in the workforce, but it is also true that many workers worked in harsh conditions and did try to avoid regulations
- In some respects the USSR did become a much greater industrial power, but it is also true that there were major costs, such as a heavy reliance on muscle power rather than technology to increase production, considerable faults and errors, and a neglect of some sectors at the expense of others.

To address 'how far', students should also indicate some similarity between the sources. For example:

- both sources agree that plan targets were not always reached
- both sources agree that there were shortcomings in planning and organisation.

In making a judgement about the degree of difference, students may conclude that there were clearly both positive and negative results arising from the First Five-Year Plan, and it is possible to argue the extent to which the positives outweighed the negatives or vice versa.

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**Question 1****02** Use **Sources A, B and C** and your own knowledge.

How successful were Stalin's economic policies in strengthening the USSR's industrial economy by the outbreak of war in 1941? (24 marks)

*Target: AO1(b), AO2(a), AO2(b)*

**Levels Mark Scheme**

- Nothing written worthy of credit. **0**
- L1:** Answers may be based on sources or on own knowledge alone, or they may comprise an undeveloped mixture of the two. They may contain some descriptive material which is only loosely linked to the focus of the question or they may address only a part of the question. Alternatively, there may be some explicit comment with little, if any, appropriate support. Answers are likely to be generalised and assertive. There will be little, if any, awareness of differing historical interpretations. The response will be limited in development and skills of written communication will be weak. **1-6**
- L2:** Answers may be based on sources or on own knowledge alone, or they may contain a mixture of the two. They may be almost entirely descriptive with few explicit links to the focus of the question. Alternatively, they may contain some explicit comment with relevant but limited support. They will display limited understanding of differing historical interpretations. Answers will be coherent but weakly expressed and/or poorly structured. **7-11**
- L3:** Answers will show a developed understanding of the demands of the question using evidence from **both** the sources **and** own knowledge. They will provide some assessment backed by relevant and appropriately selected evidence, but they will lack depth and/or balance. There will be some understanding of varying historical interpretations. Answers will, for the most part, be clearly expressed and show some organisation in the presentation of material. **12-16**
- L4:** Answers will show explicit understanding of the demands of the question. They will develop a balanced argument backed by a good range of appropriately selected evidence from the sources and own knowledge, and a good understanding of historical interpretations. Answers will, for the most part, show organisation and good skills of written communication. **17-21**
- L5:** Answers will be well-focused and closely argued. The arguments will be supported by precisely selected evidence from the sources and own knowledge, incorporating well-developed understanding of historical interpretations and debate. Answers will, for the most part, be carefully organised and fluently written, using appropriate vocabulary. **22-24**
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**Indicative content**

**Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.**

Students should be able to make a judgement by addressing the focus of the question and offering some balance of other factors or views. In 'how important' and 'how successful' questions, the answer could be (but does not need to be) exclusively based on the focus of the question.

Students should use the sources as evidence in their answer.

Relevant material from the sources would include:

- **Source A** indicates significant growth in a number of key industries, which should have helped the Soviet economy, especially in ease of war
- **Source B** focuses on the situation by 1932, but does emphasise the weaknesses of the economy at that time, implying that far from strengthening the USSR, it had been weakened and demoralised
- **Source C** outlines the positive effects of the Second Plan which built on earlier efforts and enabled the leadership to focus on its priority of strengthening the USSR.

From students' own knowledge:

Factors suggesting a strengthening of the industrial economy might include:

- the improvements in the infrastructure, especially in the middle and late 30s
- the building up of defence industries
- the evidence of vastly increased production by 1941
- there were other improvements such as the elimination of unemployment and more working opportunities.

Factors suggesting that the economy was not significantly strengthened might include:

- there was wastage, mistakes in the allocation of resources, insufficient quality control
- certain areas of the economy such as consumer goods were still comparatively neglected
- propaganda hid some of the realities, e.g. that not all workers were happy
- there was often distortion of the realities as managers tried to prove they were meeting or exceeding targets.

Good answers are likely to conclude that in several respects the industrial economy had been significantly strengthened by 1941 – after all, the USSR out produced Germany and was able to win the war. However, the answer may also conclude that there were still weaknesses in the economy, and the Stalinist economy with its rigid priorities created problems which were to become more and more serious in the future.



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**Question 2**

- 03** Explain why, in the mid-1920s, Stalin favoured the policy of 'Socialism in One Country'.  
(12 marks)

*Target: AO1(a), AO1(b)*

**Levels Mark Scheme**

- Nothing written worthy of credit. **0**
- L1:** Answers will contain either some descriptive material which is only loosely linked to the focus of the question or some explicit comment with little, if any, appropriate support. Answers are likely to be generalised and assertive. The response will be limited in development and skills of written communication will be weak. **1-2**
- L2:** Answers will demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of the demands of the question. They will **either** be almost entirely descriptive with few explicit links to the question **or** they will provide some explanations backed by evidence that is limited in range and/or depth. Answers will be coherent but weakly expressed and/or poorly structured. **3-6**
- L3:** Answers will demonstrate good understanding of the demands of the question providing relevant explanations backed by appropriately selected information, although this may not be full or comprehensive. Answers will, for the most part, be clearly expressed and show some organisation in the presentation of material. **7-9**
- L4:** Answers will be well-focused, identifying a range of specific explanations, backed by precise evidence and demonstrating good understanding of the connections and links between events/issues. Answers will, for the most part, be well-written and organised. **10-12**

**Indicative content**

**Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.**

Answers should include a range of reasons as to why Stalin favoured 'Socialism in One Country'.

Students might include some of the following factors:

- it was a popular policy, because it promised that the Soviet people's future lay in their own hands rather than be dependent on world revolution
- it was a tactic of Stalin in his struggle for influence against Trotsky
- all Communists believed in a policy of striving for socialism by one method or another
- there was evidence that NEP was not working well economically, as well as being repellent to many Communists.

To reach higher levels, students will need to show the inter-relationship of the reasons given. For example, they might emphasise that there were political, ideological and economic motives for the policy, and probably all were important to Stalin, although there may be a debate about

whether the policy was just a cynical tactic to gain power and split the opposition, or whether he was driven by economic considerations which were important to all Communists.

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**Question 2**

- 04** 'The New Economic Policy was an economic disaster for the USSR.'  
Explain why you agree or disagree with this view. (24 marks)

*Target: AO1(a), AO1(b), AO2(b)*

**Levels Mark Scheme**

- Nothing written worthy of credit. **0**
- L1:** Answers may **either** contain some descriptive material which is only loosely linked to the focus of the question **or** they may address only a limited part of the period of the question. Alternatively, there may be some explicit comment with little, if any, appropriate support. Answers are likely to be generalised and assertive. There will be little, if any, awareness of differing historical interpretations. The response will be limited in development and skills of written communication will be weak. **1-6**
- L2:** Answers will show some understanding of the demands of the question. They will **either** be almost entirely descriptive with few explicit links to the question **or** they may contain some explicit comment with relevant but limited support. They will display limited understanding of differing historical interpretations. Answers will be coherent but weakly expressed and/or poorly structured. **7-11**
- L3:** Answers will show a developed understanding of the demands of the question. They will provide some assessment, backed by relevant and appropriately selected evidence, but they will lack depth and/or balance. There will be some understanding of varying historical interpretations. Answers will, for the most part, be clearly expressed and show some organisation in the presentation of material. **12-16**
- L4:** Answers will show explicit understanding of the demands of the question. They will develop a balanced argument backed by a good range of appropriately selected evidence and a good understanding of historical interpretations. Answers will, for the most part, show organisation and good skills of written communication. **17-21**
- L5:** Answers will be well-focused and closely argued. The arguments will be supported by precisely selected evidence leading to a relevant conclusion/judgement, incorporating well-developed understanding of historical interpretations and debate. Answers will, for the most part, be carefully organised and fluently written, using appropriate vocabulary. **22-24**

## Indicative content

**Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.**

Students should be able to make a judgement by balancing evidence which supports the view given against that which does not.

Evidence which agrees might include:

- heavy industry in particular was very inefficient under NEP, being heavily subsidised
- NEP did not meet the objective of satisfying all Communists: many were hostile to it
- although NEP had been a compromise partly to win over the peasants, many peasants were still not reconciled to the regime
- the economy was not secure, e.g. a reluctance of peasants to supply food led to the procurement crisis.

Evidence which disagrees might include:

- the economy was in a much better position than in 1921 or even 1924
- there had been a recovery in some key areas, and many people had prospered
- NEP had met its political objective of having brought some stability and enabled the Party to develop its hold, at least in urban areas.

Good answers may conclude that NEP had been in some ways a short-term success, in helping Russia recover from civil war, but as a way of organising society it was deficient for many Communists, since it appeared to have strengthened class differences, and it was not a very convincing half-way house on the way to socialism.

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**Question 3**

**05** Explain why Stalin believed Kirov was a threat to his own position. (12 marks)

*Target: AO1(a), AO1(b)*

**Levels Mark Scheme**

- Nothing written worthy of credit. **0**
- L1:** Answers will contain either some descriptive material which is only loosely linked to the focus of the question or some explicit comment with little, if any, appropriate support. Answers are likely to be generalised and assertive. The response will be limited in development and skills of written communication will be weak. **1-2**
- L2:** Answers will demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of the demands of the question. They will **either** be almost entirely descriptive with few explicit links to the question **or** they will provide some explanations backed by evidence that is limited in range and/or depth. Answers will be coherent but weakly expressed and/or poorly structured. **3-6**
- L3:** Answers will demonstrate good understanding of the demands of the question providing relevant explanations backed by appropriately selected information, although this may not be full or comprehensive. Answers will, for the most part, be clearly expressed and show some organisation in the presentation of material. **7-9**
- L4:** Answers will be well-focused, identifying a range of specific explanations, backed by precise evidence and demonstrating good understanding of the connections and links between events/issues. Answers will, for the most part, be well-written and organised. **10-12**

**Indicative content**

**Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.**

Answers should include a range of reasons as to why Stalin saw Kirov as a threat to himself.

Students might include some of the following factors:

- Stalin saw **any** leading Communist as a possible threat to his leadership position
- as leader of the Leningrad Party organisation (since 1926), Kirov was a very important political figure in the USSR
- many already saw the popular Kirov as a possible rival or eventual successor to Stalin
- some Communists regarded Kirov (probably wrongly) as more liberal than Stalin and probably attracted those who were uncertain about, or opposed to, Stalin's policies
- Kirov had been prepared to argue with Stalin, for example opposing Stalin's attempt to have Riutin executed in 1932, and resisting Stalin's attempt to move him from his strong Leningrad base
- Kirov in 1934 stood against Stalin for the post of General Secretary at the 17th Party Congress and probably won the ballot before Stalin intervened.

To reach higher levels, students will need to show the inter-relationship of the reasons given. For example, they might focus on the interaction between Stalin's personal paranoia and more considered political reasons for Stalin's perception of 'threats' to himself.

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**Question 3**

- 06** 'The Great Terror weakened the USSR in the years 1936 to 1941.'  
Explain why you agree or disagree with this view. (24 marks)

*Target: AO1(a), AO1(b), AO2(b)*

**Levels Mark Scheme**

- Nothing written worthy of credit. **0**
- L1:** Answers may **either** contain some descriptive material which is only loosely linked to the focus of the question **or** they may address only a limited part of the period of the question. Alternatively, there may be some explicit comment with little, if any, appropriate support. Answers are likely to be generalised and assertive. There will be little, if any, awareness of differing historical interpretations. The response will be limited in development and skills of written communication will be weak. **1-6**
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- L5:** Answers will be well-focused and closely argued. The arguments will be supported by precisely selected evidence leading to a relevant conclusion/judgement, incorporating well-developed understanding of historical interpretations and debate. Answers will, for the most part, be carefully organised and fluently written, using appropriate vocabulary. **22-24**

## Indicative content

**Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.**

Students should be able to make a judgement by balancing points which agree with the view that the Terror weakened the USSR by 1941.

Points which agrees might include:

- the purge of the armed forces meant the loss of a lot of experienced officers and some disruption to the Army
- fear of the Terror stifled initiative and fear of innovation, e.g. amongst enterprise managers
- the Terror meant the loss of many valuable specialists in all walks of life
- the regime devoted large amounts of resources in trying to control its own population.

Points which disagree might include:

- in the army, many of the purge victims had been rehabilitated by 1941 and the army had recovered
- people did speak out against perceived injustices even during the Terror
- there appeared to be some stability and improvements in economic and social conditions after 1938
- Stalin's dictatorship provided stability
- the 'siege mentality' brought about by Stalinism served the USSR well when war came in 1941.

Good answers may conclude that the Terror both strengthened and weakened the USSR, rather than having a totally negative or positive effect.

## Converting marks into UMS marks

Convert raw marks into marks on the Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) by using the link below.

**UMS conversion calculator:** [www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion](http://www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion)