



General Certificate of Education

History 5041/6041

Alternative F Russia and the USSR, 1855–1991

Mark Scheme

2006 examination – June series

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 meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation meeting ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for the standardisation meeting each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed at the meeting and legislated for. If, after this meeting, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been discussed at the meeting 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 candidates' 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.

CRITERIA FOR MARKING GCE HISTORY:

AS and A2 EXAMINATION PAPERS

General Guidance for Examiners

A: INTRODUCTION

The AQA's revised AS/A2 History specification has been designed to be 'objectives-led' in that questions are set which address the assessment objectives published in the Board's specifications. These cover the normal range of skills, knowledge and understanding which have been addressed by AS and A2 level candidates for a number of years.

Most questions will address more than one objective reflecting the fact that, at AS/A2 level, high-level historical skills, including knowledge and understanding, are usually deployed together.

The revised specification has addressed subject content through the identification of 'key questions' which focus on important historical issues. These 'key questions' give emphasis to the view that GCE History is concerned with the analysis of historical problems and issues, the study of which encourages candidates to make judgements grounded in evidence and information.

The schemes of marking for the new specification reflect these underlying principles. The mark scheme which follows is of the 'levels of response' type showing that candidates are expected to demonstrate their mastery of historical skills in the context of their knowledge and understanding of History.

Consistency of marking is of the essence in all public examinations. This factor is particularly important in a subject like History which offers a wide choice of subject content options or alternatives within the specification for AS and A2.

It is therefore of vital importance that assistant examiners apply the marking scheme as directed by the Principal Examiner in order to facilitate comparability with the marking of other alternatives and across all the specifications offered by the Board.

Before scrutinising and applying the detail of the specific mark scheme which follows, assistant examiners are required to familiarise themselves with the instructions and guidance on the general principles to apply in determining into which level of response an answer should fall (Section B for AS and Section C for A2) and in deciding on a mark within a particular level of response (Section D).

B: EXEMPLIFICATION OF AS LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

Level 1:

The answer is excessively generalised and indiscriminating amounting to little more than assertion, involving generalisations which could apply to almost any time and/or place.

Exemplification/Guidance

Answers at this level will

- be excessively generalised and indiscriminating with little reference to the focus of the question
- lack specific factual information relevant to the issues
- lack awareness of the specific context
- be limited in the ability to communicate clearly in an organised manner, and demonstrate limited grammatical accuracy.

Level 2:

Either

Demonstrates by relevant selection of material some understanding of a range of issues.

Or

Demonstrates by relevant selection of material, implicit understanding of a wider range of relevant issues. Most such answers will be dependent on descriptions, but will have valid links.

Exemplification/Guidance

Either responses will have the following characteristics: they will

- offer a relevant but outline only description in response to the question
- contain some irrelevance and inaccuracy
- demonstrate coverage of some parts of the question but be lacking in balance
- have some direction and focus demonstrated through introductions or conclusions
- demonstrate some effective use of language, but be loose in structure and limited grammatically.

Or responses will have the following characteristics: they will

- show understanding of some but not all of the issues in varying depth
- provide accurate factual information relevant to the issues
- demonstrate some understanding of linkages between issues
- have some direction and focus through appropriate introductions or conclusions
- demonstrate some effective use of language, but be loose in structure and limited grammatically.

Level 3:

Demonstrates by selection of appropriate material, explicit understanding of some issues relevant to the question. Most such answers will show understanding of the analytical demands but will lack weight or balance.

Exemplification/guidance

These responses will have the following characteristics: they will

- present arguments which have some focus and relevance, but which are limited in scope
- demonstrate an awareness of the specific context
- contain some accurate but limited factual support
- attempt all parts of the question, but coverage will lack balance and/or depth
- demonstrate some effective use of language, be coherent in structure but limited grammatically.

Level 4:

Demonstrates by selection of a wide range of precisely selected material, explicit understanding of the question and provides a balanced explanation.

Exemplification/guidance

These responses will have the following characteristics: they will

- be largely analytical but will include some narrative
- deploy relevant factual material effectively, although this may not be comprehensive
- develop an argument which is focused and relevant
- cover all parts of the question but will treat some aspects in greater depth than others
- use language effectively in a coherent and generally grammatically correct style.

Level 5:

As L4, but contains judgement as demanded by the question, which may be implicit or partial.

Exemplification/guidance

These responses will have the following characteristics: they will

- offer sustained analysis, with relevant supporting detail
- maintain a consistent argument which may, however, be incompletely developed and in places, unconvincing,
- cover all parts of the question with a reasonable balance between the parts
- attempt to offer judgement, but this may be partial and in the form of a conclusion or a summary
- communicate effectively through accurate, fluent and well directed prose.

C: EXEMPLIFICATION OF A LEVEL (A2) DESCRIPTORS

The relationship between the Assessment Objectives (AOs) 1.1, 1.2 and 2 and the Levels of Response.

A study of the generic levels of response mark scheme will show that candidates who operate solely or predominantly in AO 1.1, by writing a narrative or descriptive response, will restrict themselves to a maximum of 6 out of 20 marks by performing at Level 1. Those candidates going on to provide more explanation (AO 1.2), supported by the relevant selection of material (AO1.1), will have access to approximately 6 more marks, performing at Level 2 and low Level 3, depending on how implicit or partial their judgements prove to be. Candidates providing explanation with evaluation and judgement, supported by the selection of appropriate information and exemplification, will clearly be operating in all 3 AOs (AO 2, AO1.2 and AO1.1) and will therefore have access to the highest levels and the full range of 20 marks by performing in Levels 3, 4 and 5.

Level 1:

Either

Is able to demonstrate, by relevant selection of material, implicit understanding of the question. Answers will be predominantly, or wholly narrative.

Or

Answer implies analysis but is excessively generalised, being largely or wholly devoid of specific information. Such answers will amount to little more than assertion, involving generalisations which could apply to almost any time and/or place.

Exemplification/guidance

Narrative responses will have the following characteristic: they

- will lack direction and any clear links to the analytical demands of the question
- will, therefore, offer a relevant but outline-only description in response to the question
- will be limited in terms of communication skills, organisation and grammatical accuracy.

Assertive responses: at this level, such responses will:

- lack any significant corroboration
- be generalised and poorly focused
- demonstrate limited appreciation of specific content
- be limited in terms of communication skills, organisation and grammatical accuracy.

IT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO DISCRIMINATE BETWEEN THIS TYPE OF RESPONSE AND THOSE WHICH ARE SUCCINCT AND UNDEVELOPED BUT FOCUSED AND VALID (appropriate for Level 2 or above).

Level 2:*Either*

Demonstrates, by relevant selection of material, some understanding of a range of relevant issues. Most such answers will show understanding of the analytical demands but lack weight and balance.

Or

Demonstrates, by relevant selection of material, implicit understanding of a wide range of relevant issues. Most such answers will be dependent on descriptions, but will have valid links.

Exemplification/guidance

Narrative responses will have the following characteristics:

- understanding of some but not all of the issues
- some direction and focus demonstrated largely through introductions or conclusions
- some irrelevance and inaccuracy
- coverage of all parts of the question but be lacking in balance
- some effective use of the language, be coherent in structure, but limited grammatically.

Analytical responses will have the following characteristics:

- arguments which have some focus and relevance
- an awareness of the specific context
- some accurate but limited factual support
- coverage of all parts of the question but be lacking in balance
- some effective use of language, be coherent in structure, but limited grammatically.

Level 3:

Demonstrates by selection of appropriate material, explicit understanding of a range of issues relevant to the question. Judgement, as demanded by the question, may be implicit or partial.

Exemplification/guidance

Level 3 responses will be characterised by the following:

- the approach will be generally analytical but may include some narrative passages which will be limited and controlled
 - analysis will be focused and substantiated, although a complete balance of treatment of issues is not to be expected at this level nor is full supporting material
 - there will be a consistent argument which may, however, be incompletely developed, not fully convincing or which may occasionally digress into narrative
 - there will be relevant supporting material, although not necessarily comprehensive, which might include reference to interpretations
 - effective use of language, appropriate historical terminology and coherence of style.
-

Level 4:

Demonstrates by selection of a wide range of precisely selected material, explicit understanding of the demands of the question and provides a consistently analytical response to it. Judgement, as demanded by the question, will be explicit but may be limited in scope.

Exemplification/guidance

Answers at this level have the following characteristics:

- sustained analysis, explicitly supported by relevant and accurate evidence
- little or no narrative, usually in the form of exemplification
- coverage of all the major issues, although there may not be balance of treatment
- an attempt to offer judgement, but this may be partial and in the form of a conclusion or summary
- effective skills of communication through the use of accurate, fluent and well directed prose.

Level 5:

As Level 4 but also shows appropriate conceptual awareness which, together with the selection of a wide range of precisely selected evidence, offers independent and effectively sustained judgement appropriate to the full demands of the question.

Exemplification/guidance

Level 5 will be differentiated from Level 4 in that there will be:

- a consistently analytical approach
- consistent corroboration by reference to selected evidence
- a clear and consistent attempt to reach judgements
- some evidence of independence of thought, but not necessarily of originality
- a good conceptual understanding
- strong and effective communication skills, grammatically accurate and demonstrating coherence and clarity of thought.

D: DECIDING ON MARKS WITHIN A LEVEL

These principles are applicable to both the Advanced Subsidiary examination and to the A level (A2) examination.

Good examining is, ultimately, about the **consistent application of judgement**. Mark schemes provide the necessary framework for exercising that judgement but it cannot cover all eventualities. This is especially so in subjects like History, which in part rely upon different interpretations and different emphases given to the same content. One of the main difficulties confronting examiners is: “What precise mark should I give to a response *within* a level?”. Levels may cover four, five or even six marks. From a maximum of 20, this is a large proportion. In making a decision about a specific mark to award, it is vitally important to think *first* of the mid-range within the level, where the level covers more than two marks. Comparison with other candidates’ responses **to the same question** might then suggest that such an award would be unduly generous or severe.

In making a decision away from the middle of the level, examiners should ask themselves several questions relating to candidate attainment, **including the quality of written communication skills**. The more positive the answer, the higher should be the mark awarded. We want to avoid “bunching” of marks. Levels mark schemes can produce regression to the mean, which should be avoided.

So, is the response:

- precise in its use of factual information?
- appropriately detailed?
- factually accurate?
- appropriately balanced, or markedly better in some areas than in others?
- and, **with regard to the quality of written communication skills:**
generally coherent in expression and cogent in development (as appropriate to the level awarded by organising relevant information clearly and coherently, using specialist vocabulary and terminology)?
- well-presented as to general quality of language, i.e. use of syntax (including accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar)? (In operating this criterion, however, it is important to avoid “double jeopardy”. Going to the bottom of the mark range for a level in each part of a structured question might well result in too harsh a judgement. The overall aim is to mark positively, giving credit for what candidates know, understand and can do, rather than looking for reasons to reduce marks.)

It is very important that Assistant Examiners **do not** always start at the lowest mark within the level and look for reasons to increase the level of reward from the lowest point. This will depress marks for the alternative in question and will cause problems of comparability with other question papers within the same specification.

Alternative F: Russia and the USSR, 1855–1991

AS Unit 1: Tsarist and Revolutionary Russia, 1855–1917

Question 1

- (a) Use **Source A** and your own knowledge.

Explain briefly the significance of ‘the entire agrarian problem’ (line 3) in the context of Russia’s economic situation before the First World War. (3 marks)

Target: AO1.1, AO2

- L1: Demonstrates basic understanding of the issue using the source, e.g. Russian agriculture was backward and/or inefficient. **1**
- L2: Demonstrates developed understanding of the issue in relation to both the source and context, e.g. the agrarian problem centred on the fact that most Russian peasants were small-scale, inefficient farmers, saddled with debt, subject to the mir, and with few incentives or opportunities to change. Credit comments about Stolypin’s reforms, but this is not necessary for maximum marks. **2-3**

- (b) Use **Sources B** and **C** and your own knowledge.

Explain how **Source C** challenges the view in **Source B** of Russian instability in the years 1906 to 1914. (7 marks)

Target: AO1.2, AO2

Whilst candidates are expected to deploy own knowledge in assessing the degree to which the sources differ/the utility of the source, such deployment may well be implicit and it would be inappropriate to penalise full and effective answers which do not explicitly contain ‘own knowledge’. The effectiveness of the comparison/assessment of utility will be greater where it is clear that the candidates are aware of the context; indeed, in assessing utility, this will be very significant. It would be inappropriate, however, to expect direct and specific reference to ‘pieces’ of factual content.

- L1: Extracts relevant information about the issue from both sources, with limited reference to the context, e.g. Source B refers to tension both inside and outside parliament, and calls for radical change. Source C mentions dissatisfaction in 1914, but conveys an impression of overall stability. **1-2**
- L2: Extracts and compares information about the issue from both sources with reference to own knowledge, e.g. Source B is written soon after the Lena Goldfields massacre, which evoked memories of Bloody Sunday in 1905 and refers clearly to tension. Although the Third and Fourth Dumas were more compliant, the source implies that there was still opposition within it, by referring to calls for radical change. In contrast, Source C, whilst acknowledging dissatisfaction and ‘strains’, insists that

dissatisfaction with the regime was not crucial, and that the Tsar was confident in his position. In 1914 on the outbreak of war, the Tsar benefited from the traditional reserves of loyalty and patriotism. **3-5**

- L3: Extracts and compares information from both sources with reference to own knowledge and draws conclusions, e.g. recognises that Source B is a primary source from the time. It is from Moscow, a large city where one might expect more potential unrest because of the congregation of a large, potentially volatile, working class. It may be that the secret policeman was talking up the “tension”, because it was the focus of his job and he may even have been subconsciously justifying the existence of people like himself. In contrast, Source C, a secondary source, is a more dispassionate account about the situation two years later: the regime had survived crises like Lena, and although there was an increasing number of strikes, there is little evidence of organised opposition, especially since revolutionary leaders were mostly in exile. Tension even subsided on the outbreak of war, and only resurfaced once the war started to go badly. **6-7**

- (c) Use **Sources A, B** and **C** and your own knowledge.

Explain the importance of government concessions and reforms, in relation to other factors, in preserving tsarist authority in the years 1905 to 1914. *(15 marks)*

Target: AO1.1, AO1.2, AO2

- L1: The answer is excessively generalised and indiscriminating amounting to little more than assertion, involving generalisations which could apply to almost any time and/or place, based *either* on own knowledge *or* sources. **1-4**

- L2: ***Either***

Demonstrates, by relevant selection of material, *either* from the sources *or* from own knowledge, some understanding of a range of relevant issues.

Or

Demonstrates, by relevant selection of material, *either* from the sources *or* from own knowledge, implicit understanding of a wide range of relevant issues. Most such answers will be dependent on descriptions but will have valid links.

Or

Demonstrates, by limited selection of material, *both* from the sources *and* from own knowledge, implicit understanding of the relevant issues. These answers, while relevant, will lack both range and depth and contain some assertion. **5-8**

- L3: Is able to demonstrate, by relevant selection of material, *both* from the sources *and* from own knowledge, some understanding of the demands of the question. **9-11**

- L4: Demonstrates, by selection of a wide range of precisely selected material, *both*

from the sources *and* from own knowledge, explicit understanding of the question and provides a balanced explanation. **12-13**

L5: As L4, but contains judgement, as demanded by the question, which may be implicit and partial. **14-15**

Indicative content

Source A asserts that Stolypin's agrarian reforms were very successful, and, by implication, helped to preserve stability. Source B refers to the Duma, which was a tsarist concession after 1905, although the implication is that the concession was not totally successful, since there was still radical opposition in the Duma. Source C does not refer to concessions.

Concessions were important in helping the regime to survive in 1905, because the October Manifesto and the Dumas did help to split the opposition between moderate opponents and radicals like the Bolsheviks who continued to oppose the regime, but ineffectually, with limited support. When the Dumas criticised the regime and called for more reform, they were replaced and the electoral system was re-jigged to make the Dumas more conservative – which appeared to work, despite the activities referred to in Source B. Stolypin's reforms were controversial: they did allow peasants to buy their land and possibly become more conservative and loyal as he intended, but their overall impact was limited before 1914. Other reforms in education and industry were not radical. Tsarist authority was also upheld by other factors: the ruthless suppression of opponents after 1905 symbolised by Stolypin's repression in the countryside. The Tsar retained military support and could also rely on traditional loyalties to some extent. Radical opposition leaders like Lenin were in exile. The machinery of an undemocratic police state made organised opposition difficult. The economy was subject to periodic crises, but had developed considerably since the 1880s. The Tsar had a lot going for him: in 1914 when war broke out there was a resurgence of patriotism. Clearly there were both elements of concessions, repression, and a range of other factors which helped to keep the Tsar in power.

Answers at Level 1 are likely to focus on a limited account of the concessions and reforms. At Level 2 there will be a greater range and selectivity in use of evidence and some attempt to relate it to the issue of tsarist authority and stability. Level 3 responses will have greater accuracy, range and depth and will make more specific links between the concessions, reform and maintenance of authority. At Level 4 the links will be argued more convincingly and there will be good coverage of the 1905–1914 period. Level 5 answers will probably cross reference sources and own knowledge effectively and draw clear conclusions about concessions, reform and authority.

Question 2

- (a) Explain briefly what is meant by 'the refusal of the autocracy to consider political reform' in the context of government under Tsars Alexander II and Alexander III. *(3 marks)*

Target: AO1.1

L1: Basic or partial definition of the term, largely based on the extract, e.g. both Tsars believed in absolute rule. **1**

L2: Developed explanation of the term, linked to the context, e.g. Alexander II recognised the need for reform and initiated several measures after 1855. However, he would not contemplate measures which might reduce his own power. Russia remained an autocracy, although proposals for limited reform were being debated just before Alexander II's assassination. Alexander III, surrounded by reactionary advisers, refused to contemplate any political reform. **2-3**

(b) Explain why there was a growth in opposition to tsarism between 1861 and the accession of Nicholas II in 1894. **(7 marks)**

Target: AO1.1, AO1.2

L1: Demonstrates understanding of the issue through general and unsupported statements, e.g. groups opposing tsarist rule became more active from the 1860s onwards. **1-2**

L2: Demonstrates understanding of specific factors explaining the development of the issue through relevant and appropriately selected material, e.g. there had been dissatisfaction with the results of emancipation in 1861, both from freed serfs and former serf-owners. Alexander II's other reforms did not radically transform the Russian state – and the autocracy was untouched. The Polish revolt and attempted assassination of the Tsar set him against further reform from the mid 1860s, so those dissatisfied with reforms were even more alienated. The growth of student radicalism, for example, helped fuel the Populist movement. Other groups such as Land and Liberty saw direct action as the only way to effect political change. There was also the growth of liberal opposition from intellectuals who wanted not social revolution but constitutional change on Western lines. Economic pressures caused by land hunger amongst the peasantry and from developing industrial centres created more unrest. The absence of representative systems and the apparatus of a police state made peaceful opposition difficult or ineffectual. The reactionary regime of Alexander III fuelled demands for change. There was the beginning of a Marxist movement in Russia. **3-5**

L3: Demonstrates explicit understanding of a range of factors explaining the development of the issue and prioritises, makes links or draws conclusions about their relative importance, e.g. develops the context of opposition, develops the distinction between peaceful opposition and violent resistance, and draws a distinction between reigns or the various types of opposition. **6-7**

(c) 'Alexander II and Alexander III were remarkably successful in suppressing opposition to their regimes.'
Explain why you agree or disagree with this statement. **(15 marks)**

Target: AO1.1, AO1.2, AO2

L1: The answer is excessively generalised and indiscriminating, amounting to little more than assertion, involving generalisations which could apply to almost any time and/or place. **1-4**

L2: ***Either***
Demonstrates, by relevant selection of material, some understanding of a range of issues.

Or

Demonstrates, by relevant selection of material, some understanding of a wider range of relevant issues. Most such answers will be dependent on descriptions, but will have valid links. **5-8**

L3: Demonstrates, by relevant selection of appropriate material, explicit understanding of some of the issues relevant to the question. Most such answers will show understanding of the analytical demands but will lack weight and balance. **9-11**

L4: Demonstrates, by selection of a wide range of precisely selected material, explicit understanding of the question and provides a balanced explanation. **12-13**

L5: As L4, but contains judgement, as demanded by the question, which may be implicit or partial. **14-15**

Indicative content

Ultimately Alexander II was unsuccessful since he was assassinated by a terrorist group. Alexander III was successful in that he was not overthrown or forced to initiate change. However, the issues are more complex. Opposition was not successful in overturning tsarism. This was partly due to the repressive nature of the regime, with the apparatus of a police state (censorship, secret police etc.) making peaceful opposition not impossible but difficult. But there were other factors. The “To the People” movement failed because intellectual reformers could not connect with peasants. Although there were dissatisfied groups amongst peasants, there were also reserves of loyalty to the throne. Liberal opposition failed to secure any fundamental change because it had no effective voice. The regime was successful in resisting fundamental change: Alexander II’s reforms were important, but made changes to the law, education and other institutions without threatening fundamental change. Reforms largely dried up from the mid 1860s, and Alexander III was against reform on principle, and was supported by reactionaries like Pobedonostev. Nicholas II inherited a throne in 1894 with as much real power as Alexander II had possessed in 1855, although there were some threatening signs on the horizon.

Answers at Level 1 are likely to focus on a limited account of the reigns of the two tsars. At Level 2 there will be a greater range and selectivity in use of evidence and some attempt to relate it to the issue of suppression of reform and conservative autocracy. Level 3 responses will have greater accuracy, range and depth and will make more specific links between repression and resistance to change. At Level 4 the links will be argued more convincingly and there will be good coverage of the reigns of both tsars. Level 5 answers will additionally make judgements and draw sustained conclusions.

Question 3

- (a) Explain briefly the meaning of the term ‘soviets’ in the context of the February/March Revolution in 1917. (3 marks)

Target: AO1.1

- L1: Basic or partial definition of the term, largely based on the extract, e.g. a soviet was a council. **1**
- L2: Developed explanation of the term, linked to the context, e.g. soviets were councils elected mostly by soldiers, sailors and workers, and were therefore a form of direct democracy. They revived the tradition of 1905. There were several soviets in Russian cities, but the Petrograd Soviet was the most significant, since it was at the centre of events in the February Revolution. **2-3**

- (b) Explain why the Provisional Government lost support between the two revolutions of 1917. (7 marks)

Target: AO1.1, AO1.2

- L1: Demonstrates understanding of the issue through general and unsupported statements, e.g. Russian problems continued and the Provisional Government became unpopular. **1-2**
- L2: Demonstrates understanding of specific factors explaining the development of the event through relevant and appropriately selected material, e.g. the Provisional Government was only temporary; its authority was challenged by the soviet; it was not elected and had no inherent authority; it failed to deal with the economic and military problems caused by war; it gave freedom to political opponents; it introduced freedoms but failed to carry out fundamental reforms, e.g. in land ownership; there was disunity within the Provisional Government. There were also other factors, notably the growing threat from the Bolsheviks after Lenin’s return to Russia. **3-5**
- L3: Demonstrates explicit understanding of a range of factors explaining the development of the issue and prioritises, makes links or draws conclusions about their relative importance, e.g. balances the contribution of the Provisional Government itself (its inherent weaknesses and failures) and the role of other factors such as the opposition, which fed off these weaknesses and helped to exacerbate them. **6-7**

- (c) ‘In contrast to the spontaneous nature of the overthrow of tsarism in February 1917, the Bolshevik success of October 1917 was a triumph of planning.’
Explain why you agree or disagree with this statement. (15 marks)

Target: AO1.1, AO1.2, AO2

- L1: The answer is excessively generalised and indiscriminating, amounting to little more than assertion, involving generalisations which could apply to almost any time and/or place. **1-4**
- L2: ***Either***
Demonstrates, by relevant selection of material, some understanding of a range of issues.
- Or***
Demonstrates, by relevant selection of material, some understanding of a wider range of relevant issues. Most such answers will be dependent on descriptions, but will have valid links. **5-8**
- L3: Demonstrates, by relevant selection of appropriate material, explicit understanding of some issues relevant to the question. Most such answers will show understanding of the analytical demands but will lack weight and balance. **9-11**
- L4: Demonstrates, by selection of a wide range of precisely selected material, explicit understanding of the question and provides a balanced explanation. **12-13**
- L5: As L4, but contains judgement as demanded by the question, which may be implicit or partial. **14-15**

Indicative content

There are various interpretations of the February Revolution, but most commentators agree that despite the build up of discontent, the actual Revolution was largely spontaneous and succeeded largely because the Tsar had few people left prepared to support him. Because it was not organised, it was largely chaotic. The Bolshevik Revolution was certainly more organised – indeed it was in the nature of a coup. It was organised by the Bolsheviks, especially Trotsky. As such it was a triumph of planning, although the lead-up was not straightforward: Lenin had to overcome opposition from within his own party about the timing. Although the Bolsheviks were better organised than most political groups, to a large extent they succeeded because there was no strong alternative group, and the Provisional Government gradually lost credibility and support – particularly through major incidents like the Kornilov Revolt. The Bolsheviks were “knocking at an open door” and took power relatively easily in October – but they only held Petrograd and Moscow, and the real conflict was only about to begin. Therefore candidates are likely to compare the two revolutions by directly contrasting the nature of a spontaneous revolt with a planned coup.

Level 1 answers are likely to focus on a limited account of the October Revolution. At Level 2 there will be a greater range and selectivity in use of evidence and some attempt to relate it

to the reasons for Bolshevik success. Level 3 responses will have greater accuracy, range and depth and will make some specific links between the revolutions and why they succeeded. At Level 4 the links will be argued more convincingly and there will be good coverage of 1917. Level 5 answers will additionally make sustained judgements and conclusions.

Alternative F: Russia and the USSR, 1855–1991

A2 Unit 4: Russia and the USSR, 1881–1985

Question 1

- (a) Use **Sources B** and **C** and your own knowledge.

How fully do these two extracts explain the different views of the progress of industrialisation in the USSR in the period of the first three Five Year Plans, 1928–1941?
(10 marks)

Target: AO1.1, AO1.2, AO2

- L1: Identifies/extracts simple statements from the sources which demonstrate agreement/disagreement on the issue. **1-2**
- L2: Demonstrates explicit understanding of utility/sufficiency etc. with reference to the sources and knowledge of the issue. **3-5**
- L3: Draws conclusions about utility/sufficiency in relation to the issue, with reference to both sources and to own knowledge. **6-8**
- L4: Uses material selected appropriately from both source and own knowledge to reach a sustained judgement on utility/sufficiency in relation to the issue. **9-10**

Indicative content

There are some basic themes in the sources, e.g. Source B suggests that industrialisation created problems, including bureaucratic confusion and misjudgements; Source C suggests that industrialisation certainly had more secure foundations by 1941, although it gives little detail on the process.

The Five Year Plans, as Source B indicates, had deficiencies with their emphasis on crude quantitative targets with little concern for quality and overall coordination. However, Source B gives no indication of the successes, which undoubtedly were also a feature, as the USSR did industrialise to an impressive extent, albeit at enormous human and material cost. This is largely due to the fact that as a Trotskyist source, Source B is bound to be critical of Stalinist methods, plus the fact that the source was written in 1930 when the process had barely begun and nobody could predict the consequences. Source C is a more considered, objective source, written much later. It summarises industrial progress both before 1914 and 1941, but gives very little detail on the 1928–1941 period – it scarcely begins to explain the actual process. Pre-1914 industrialisation began with Witte's state-sponsored industrialisation dependent on railway building, loans and foreign investment. It led to rapid advances, although Russia still lagged behind several other Powers. Progress was also uneven, punctuated by booms and slumps, although the economy was becoming less dependent on direct state input by 1914. There were some similarities in the Stalinist approach after 1928 in that the state was heavily involved. But the Stalinist economic revolution was much more radical, as Soviet society was turned upside down as heavy industry was developed at the

expense of everything else, with a ruthlessness not seen before, and marked by “new” methods such as planning and targets.

Therefore overall both sources have their uses, although alone they give only a partial explanation of the process of industrialisation.

(b) Use **Sources A, B, C and D** and your own knowledge.

Consider the extent to which Russian and Soviet Governments had a consistent approach towards developing industry in the years 1881 to 1985. (20 marks)

Target: AO1.1, AO1.2, AO2

L1: Is able to demonstrate, by relevant selection of material, *either* from appropriate sources *or* from own knowledge, implicit understanding of the question. Answers will be predominantly, or wholly, narrative. **1-6**

L2: ***Either***

Demonstrates, by relevant selection of material, *either* from the sources *or* from own knowledge, some understanding of a range of relevant issues. Most such answers will show understanding of the analytical demands, but will lack weight and balance.

Or

Demonstrates, by relevant selection of material, *both* from the sources *and* from own knowledge, implicit understanding of a wide range of relevant issues. These answers, while relevant, will lack both range and depth and will contain some assertion. **7-11**

L3: Is able to demonstrate, by relevant selection of material, *both* from the sources *and* from own knowledge, explicit understanding of the issues relevant to the question. Judgement, as demanded by the question, may be implicit or partial. **12-15**

L4: Demonstrates, by selection of a wide range of precisely selected material, *both* from the sources *and* from own knowledge, explicit understanding of the demands of the question and provides a consistently analytical response to it. Judgement, as demanded by the question, will be explicit but may be limited in scope. **16-18**

L5: As L4, but also shows appropriate conceptual awareness which, together with the selection of a wide range of precisely selected evidence, offers independent and effectively sustained judgement appropriate to the full demands of the question. **19-20**

Indicative content

Source A outlines two phases of industrialisation: firstly “forced” or state-sponsored, and secondly more spontaneous. There is some consistency with Source B in that the criticisms of industrialisation in this source clearly refer to a state-sponsored programme, albeit a more rigorous (if inefficient) one. Source C outlines some of the achievements of industrialisation, although does not explain who or what was responsible for the process. Source D is consistent with Sources A and B in that it is explaining a state-run command economy. It echoes Source B in its criticisms of the efficiency of the process, although it lacks the ideological opposition evident in Source B. Overall there is a strong thread of consistency:

all Russian and Soviet governments had industrialisation high on their agendas, although the emphasis changed at different times – it was at its most centralised and target-driven in the early 1930s, the period to which Source B refers.

Throughout this period there was an emphasis on industrialisation. Witte advocated state-sponsored industrialisation as a means of maintaining and developing Russia's Great Power status and introduced a set of policies which began a rapid process of industrialisation, but which nevertheless did not prevent Russia falling further behind. Russia remained an essentially agrarian economy. Under the Bolsheviks there were experiments with state capitalism and workers' control. War Communism, which was not really a policy but a series of ad hoc policies, was partly ideologically motivated and partly driven by the pragmatic considerations of developing war production to win the civil war. NEP might be regarded as a reversion to the pre-war capitalist economy with its toleration and indeed encouragement of private enterprise, although the "commanding heights" of major industries like the railways and mines remained under direct government control, which was an innovation. Stalin's forced industrialisation had some similarity with Witte's policy in that it was state-driven and bought in foreign expertise (paying for it with grain exports). However, the scale of the Five Year Plans and their particular methodology of targets and central allocation of resources were strikingly new, along with other aspects such as the large-scale reliance on female labour and convict labour. Thereafter there was considerable continuity in Soviet industrialisation policy, although there were occasional shifts of emphasis (for example an emphasis on armaments in the Third Plan, plus more concessions to consumer goods). After the disruption of World War Two, the Five Year Plans were resurrected, and the essence of the Stalinist economic system survived until 1985. There were shifts in emphasis – for example, Khrushchev's emphasis on consumerism and attempts to modify the centralisation of the economy. There were later modifications under Kosygin and Brezhnev. The space industry and the arms industry were given privileged treatment. Most attempts at reform had limited success, partly because of bureaucratic obstruction and apathy. No-one was really prepared to address the fundamentals of the command economy and make it more responsive to demand as in a market-style economy. Overall, the emphasis on industrial expansion with an emphasis on quantity and not quality remained a fairly consistent theme, at least from the Stalinist period onwards, once the regime had committed itself to full scale industrialisation.

At Level 1, answers will probably be based on unsupported generalisations and assertions, or based on basic description. Level 2 answers will also be predominantly descriptive and very unbalanced in their coverage of the 100-year period. At Level 3, there should be some focus on the theme of consistency and a meaningful attempt to address the precise question. However, the answer may well lack overall balance and depth. At Level 4, there should be fuller treatment of the whole period, with good coverage of the several phases discussed above. Level 5 answers will contain a developed and sustained judgement, with a good level of supporting evidence and possibly showing good perspective, e.g. in considering precise elements of consistency or inconsistency in industrialisation throughout this period.

Section B

Question 2 onward

These questions are synoptic in nature and the rewarding of candidates' responses should be clearly linked to the range of factors or issues covered in the question as indicated by the generic A2 levels of response mark scheme and by the indicative content in the specific mark scheme for each question.

Standard Mark Scheme for Essays at A2 (*without* reference to sources)

Target: AO1.1, AO1.2, AO2

- L1: ***Either***
Is able to demonstrate, by relevant selection of material, implicit understanding of the question. Answers will be predominantly or wholly narrative.
- Or***
Answer implies analysis, but is excessively generalised, being largely or wholly devoid of specific information. Such responses will amount to little more than assertion, involving generalisations which could apply to almost any time and/or place. **1-6**
- L2: ***Either***
Demonstrates, by relevant selection of material, some understanding of a range of relevant issues. Most such answers will show understanding of the analytical demands, but will lack weight and balance.
- Or***
Demonstrates, by selection of appropriate material, implicit understanding of a range of relevant issues. Most such answers will be dependent on descriptions, but will have valid links. **7-11**
- L3: Demonstrates, by selection of appropriate material, explicit understanding of a range of issues relevant to the question. Judgement, as demanded by the question, may be implicit or partial. **12-15**
- L4: Demonstrates, by selection of a wide range of precisely selected material, explicit understanding of the demands of the question and provides a consistently analytical response to it. Judgement, as demanded by the question, will be explicit but may be limited in scope. **16-18**
- L5: As L4, but also shows appropriate conceptual awareness which, together with the selection of a wide range of precisely selected evidence, offers independent and effectively sustained judgement appropriate to the full demands of the question. **19-20**

Question 2

Assess the social and economic impact of the collectivisation of agriculture in the USSR in the 1930s. (20 marks)

Use standard mark scheme for essays at A2 (*without* reference to sources).

Marks as follows:

L1: 1-6 L2: 7-11 L3: 12-15 L4: 16-18 L5: 19-20

Indicative content

The economic impact of collectivisation is probably easier to assess. Initially the policy was disastrous, in that disruption, sabotage and opposition led to a drastic fall in output, which did not recover until the mid-1930s. This, combined with the export of grain, led to severe shortages, especially in some rural areas (although the Ukraine famine was at least partly “man-made”). However, since the Government did secure the food supply, it was able to ensure that at least the new industrial towns got food supplies, to ensure the success of the industrialisation programme. Also, displaced kulaks often joined the industrial workforce. It might be argued, therefore, that the economic impact of collectivisation, as opposed to the social costs, was beneficial from the Government’s standpoint, despite the fall in output, because it was an integral part of Stalin’s strategy. However, the inefficiency of collective farming was to remain a long-term problem. The social impact was also considerable. The countryside was radically changed. Before 1928 the impact of Communism had been relatively slight, at least under NEP when the requisitioning of War Communism had stopped. Kulaks had existed alongside poorer peasants. However, collectivisation brought the countryside under Communist control for the first time. Collective farms were a new form of social organisation – and under the direct influence of the Party. The collective farm became the focal point of village life, although peasants still had their private plots to console them. The peasants were now much more susceptible to Soviet propaganda. Another social change might be considered: the demise of the kulak, and the fact that many peasants became industrial workers with a considerable change in their way of life and probably values.

At Levels 1 and 2 answers are likely to be dominated by general assertions or basic descriptions of collectivisation with limited evidence or evaluation. At Level 3 and above, answers should be reasonably wide-ranging, considering at least some of the economic and social issues, although the evaluation will not give equal weight to all of them. At Level 4 there should be some clear evaluation, and the answer should be reasonably wide-ranging on various aspects of the impact. Level 5 answers will probably show an impressive depth of evidence and a substantiated judgement.

Question 3

‘Stalin as a war leader had more strengths than weaknesses.’

Assess the validity of this view in the context of the Soviet victory in the Russo-German War of 1941–1945. (20 marks)

Use standard mark scheme for essays at A2 (*without* reference to sources).

Marks as follows:

L1: 1-6 L2: 7-11 L3: 12-15 L4: 16-18 L5: 19-20

Indicative content

Stalin proved a very successful war leader after his initial loss of nerve when the Germans attacked in 1941. It might be argued that he had helped the USSR prepare for war by creating essentially a war economy, and certainly an economic structure that was relatively easy to adapt to a war situation. On the other hand, in his desperate attempt to forestall a German attack, Stalin had left his frontier armies in a poor shape to defend.

Once the war was well under way, Stalin showed leadership qualities. He stayed in Moscow. He set up Stavka, a unified command structure, far more efficient than Hitler’s divide and rule style and reliance on sycophants. Stalin did interfere in strategy, but he also listened, and promoted good generals like Zhukov. He exploited the possibilities of propaganda, e.g. he reopened churches and appealed to Russian patriotism rather than communism. For all his ruthlessness, Stalin evoked a determined response, and supervised the Soviet juggernaut as it resisted Germany, outproduced it, and then rolled the Germans back. Stalin made mistakes and was ruthless, e.g. in his treatment of “suspicious” national groups who were deported, but there is no doubting his success, seen ultimately not only in the Soviet victory but in Stalin’s emergence as a world statesman helping to decide the fate of Europe.

Other factors were also clearly important in determining the Soviet victory: German over-ambition and strategic mistakes; Red Army heroism and inexhaustible supplies of man and woman power; Soviet economic strength; the commitment to total war; the impact of the winter on the German advance; supplies provided by the Allies; German failure to win over local populations. These factors may be mentioned or developed, but should be made relevant to the question of Stalin’s leadership.

Level 1 and Level 2 answers are likely to be dominated by general assertions or basic descriptions of the war with limited evidence or evaluation. At Level 3 and above, answers should be reasonably wide-ranging, considering at least some of the factors responsible for the Soviet success, including Stalin’s own role, although the evaluation will not necessarily cover all factors. At Level 4 there should be some clear evaluation, and the answer should be reasonably wide-ranging on the various aspects. Level 5 answers will probably show an impressive depth of evidence and a substantiated judgement on the issue of Stalin’s success vis-à-vis other factors.

Question 4

To what extent were Khrushchev's reforms prompted more by political than economic concerns about the state of the USSR following Stalin's death in 1953?
(20 marks)

Use standard mark scheme for essays at A2 (*without* reference to sources).

Marks as follows:

L1: 1-6 L2: 7-11 L3: 12-15 L4: 16-18 L5: 19-20

Indicative content

There were several economic motives for reform. Although the USSR had been successful in developing heavy industry and armaments, there had been limited advances in the development of consumer goods and agricultural industries. The population was short of consumer goods and housing, and agriculture was notoriously unproductive by western standards and had not progressed much since Tsarist times. Khrushchev regarded himself as an agricultural expert and hence his interest and measures such as incentives and the Virgin Lands Scheme. He wanted to reduce dependence on heavy industry and promote newer industries such as chemicals and light engineering. He recognised that the command economy was inefficient and over-bureaucratic. However, he wanted to streamline the bureaucracy and introduce some decentralisation, but not overturn the basis of the command economy. He wanted the USSR to develop as a modern economy, capable of overtaking the West in areas such as space but also the economy generally, to meet the aim of achieving communism.

Political and economic concerns were linked. The attack on Stalin's reputation was partly a way of persuading the Party that radical economic reforms were necessary. He also wanted to pursue co-existence with the West, and Stalin's reputation as a Cold War warrior stood in the way. Political concerns were also evident because blaming Stalin and not the Party was a way of explaining away past errors and infamous events such as the Purges. He was also aware that the culture of party privilege and bureaucracy stifled progress. Therefore de-Stalinisation had several motives.

There were other "social" motives for Khrushchev's reforms. He felt that the atmosphere of terror associated with the harshness of Stalinism was a disincentive to several aspects of personal and social development, and that the other reforms he wanted would depend to some extent on giving people a greater sense of freedom and security – within limits. He wanted people to be more prosperous and believe in communism and get some of the benefits which the Party had been preaching; and in turn the regime would not have to rely so much on repression or threat of it to keep itself in power. Therefore the motives were all interlinked, although undoubtedly political and economic concerns were crucially important as they always were in Soviet history. There can be a case for arguing that political or economic motives were more important, or that they were equally so.

At Levels 1 and 2, answers are likely to be dominated by general assertions or basic descriptions of Khrushchev's measures, with limited evidence or evaluation of motive. At Level 3 and above, answers should be reasonably wide-ranging, considering at least some of

the economic and political motives for reform, although the evaluation will not give equal weight to all aspects. At Level 4 there should be some clear evaluation, and the answer should be reasonably wide-ranging on the various motives, with an attempt at deciding whether economic or political motives were dominant. Level 5 answers will probably show an impressive depth of evidence and a substantiated judgement.

Alternative F: Russia and the USSR, 1855–1991

A2 Unit 6: The End of the Soviet Union, c1968–1991

Question 1

- (a) Use **Source B** and your own knowledge.

Assess the validity of the interpretation in **Source B** of the social and economic development in the USSR under Brezhnev’s ‘Developed Socialism’. (10 marks)

Target: AO1.1, AO2

- L1: Summarises the content of the extract and the interpretation it contains. **1-2**
- L2: Demonstrates understanding of the interpretation and relates to own knowledge. **3-5**
- L3: As L2, and evaluation of the interpretation is partial. **6-8**
- L4: Understands and evaluates the interpretation and relates to own knowledge to reach a sustained and well supported judgement on its validity. **9-10**

Indicative content

There is a lot of propaganda and wishful thinking in the source, with references to the Soviet economy booming and Soviet Communism progressing ever upwards; increased harmonisation within society; the Communist Party and other key organisations were leading the people forwards actively and progressively. Own knowledge should identify some of the obvious propagandist elements here. Elements of the source are valid. Output had certainly grown considerably since the 1930s, although problems of using Soviet statistics make it difficult to judge the validity of the “ten times” claim. The claim that the economy was more balanced and harmonious is only partially true: despite the production of more consumer goods, the basics of the economy were still unbalanced, with priority given to defence and other favoured sectors at the expense of others. Although nationalist discontent was not yet an overt issue, it was untrue to imply that there was a “Soviet people” in total harmony. The Communist Party thought of itself as progressive, but under Brezhnev it had ossified into a conservative bureaucratic organisation as much concerned with protecting its own privileges and preventing radical reform as leading the way to Communism. Trade Unions, the Komsomol and other permitted organisations were essentially tools of the Party. The majority of the peasantry and intelligentsia was not noted for its enthusiastic support for Communism.

“Developed Socialism” was as much about image as reality, and even if the Stalinist state (which is what Brezhnev’s USSR essentially was) was “socialist”, it was not developed in the way the Party claimed. For example, growth rates actually began to decline towards the end of Brezhnev’s rule. The Party was hardly a vibrant force. Nationalist unrest was on the horizon. It is an optimistic interpretation.

- (b) Use **Source C** and your own knowledge.

How useful is **Source C** as evidence of the reasons for decline of the stability of the Soviet regime during the period 1968–1985? (10 marks)

Target: AO1.1, AO2

- L1: Summarises the content of the extract in relation to the issue presented in the question. 1-2
- L2: Demonstrates some appreciation either of the strengths and/or of the limitations of the content of the source in relation to its utility/reliability within the context of the issue. 3-5
- L3: Demonstrates reasoned understanding of the strengths and limitations of the source in the context of the issue and draws conclusions about its utility/reliability. 6-8
- L4: Evaluates the utility/reliability of the source in relation to the issue in the question to reach a sustained and well supported judgement. 9-10

Indicative content

There is considerable validity in the interpretation in Source C. It is true that the Soviet centralised command economy was not conducive to reform: despite occasional tinkering, the market concept of supply and demand as the driving force was totally alien, as opposed to a system where the state determined priorities. The judgement on declining growth and stagnation is correct. The increasingly hollow nature of ideology was also true: even in the Party, whatever lip service was paid to Communism, there was an inbuilt resistance to change by conservative bureaucrats. Nationalist unrest was looming although it was not yet a crisis. There was certainly no widespread feeling of Soviet citizenship: the concept of republics of equals existed only on paper.

The source is certainly therefore a useful summary and is reasonably objective and considered. However, it lacks the detail necessary to give a wholly convincing explanation for the decline of the regime. Whilst mentioning the system of planning, the source does not elaborate on the problems this caused, for example the crude determination of priorities and the fact that problems of allocation of resources did not cater for the needs of a sophisticated economy. There is no analysis of the limited efforts at economic reform and the attempted changes in emphasis towards quality in the Tenth and Eleventh Plans. There was also more of a focus on social problems such as alcoholism, a rise in the death rate, increased divorce and so on. There is nothing on dissent and its impact, for example the activities at Sakharov. There is nothing on the growth of nationalist feeling in areas like the Baltic States and Georgia, nor the development of Russian nationalism. Candidates might even question the extent to which there **was** a decline in stability.

- (c) Use **Sources A, B** and **C** and your own knowledge.

‘The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 was not inevitable, but the failure of Soviet leaders to address its fundamental weaknesses since 1968 always made the collapse likely.’

Assess the validity of this view.

(20 marks)

Target: AO1.1, AO1.2, AO2

- L1: Is able to demonstrate, by relevant selection of material, *either* from appropriate sources *or* from own knowledge, implicit understanding of the question. Answers will be predominantly or wholly narrative. **1-6**
- L2: ***Either***
Demonstrates, by relevant selection of material, *either* from the sources *or* from own knowledge, some understanding of a range of relevant issues. Most such answers will show understanding of the analytical demands, but will lack weight and balance.
- Or***
Demonstrates, by relevant selection of material, *both* from the sources *and* from own knowledge, implicit understanding of a wide range of relevant issues. These answers, while relevant, will lack both range and depth and will contain some assertion. **7-11**
- L3: Is able to demonstrate, by relevant selection of material, *both* from the sources *and* from own knowledge, explicit understanding of the issues relevant to the question. Judgement, as demanded by the question, may be implicit or partial. **12-15**
- L4: Demonstrates, by selection of a wide range of precisely selected material, *both* from the sources *and* from own knowledge, explicit understanding of the demands of the question and provides a consistently analytical response to it. Judgement, as demanded by the question, will be explicit but may be limited in scope. **16-18**
- L5: As L4, but also shows appropriate conceptual awareness which, together with the wide range of precisely selected evidence, offers independent and effectively sustained judgement appropriate to the full demands of the question. **19-20**

Indicative content

There were several fundamental weaknesses in the period between the fall of Khrushchev and 1991. The USSR was, on paper, a superpower, and had a very powerful military and space capacity, but also suffered increasingly from its efforts to maintain this status and in its attempts to expand its scope as a world power. This was due to increasing difficulties in the economy: the Stalinist economic system remained in its essentials and occasional tinkering was defeated by bureaucracy or was insufficient to solve the problems of poor productivity, lack of advanced technology, insufficient quantities of consumer goods and so on. Brezhnev’s regime encouraged conservatism, and despite some reforms, largely swept major concerns under the carpet. Andropov attempted some reform after 1982, but it petered out. Gorbachev did attempt a more radical approach with his apparent commitment to *glasnost* and *perestroika*. However, Gorbachev still believed that a reformed Party could lead the reforms and would not commit himself to a market-based demand-driven economy. He faced opposition from conservatives but also from disappointed intellectuals and ordinary people

who did not see their material conditions improving. Factors such as rising prices and inflation made reform seem a mixed blessing, whilst political reforms actually made Gorbachev's position weaker and gave opportunities to more radical politicians like Yeltsin. Gorbachev survived the 1991 coup with difficulty, partly because his opponents were largely barren of ideas also. The eventual collapse was also due partly to the rapidly developing nationalist threat. Whether this can be attributed to the failure of the regime to address weaknesses is debatable: the republics, especially the more developed ones like the Baltic States, had never been reconciled. Under the Stalinist regimes, the Union had been kept together ultimately by the threat of force but equally by the hold of the Party over local regimes. Once the power of the Party at the centre was eroded, it was increasingly difficult to maintain control. The chief problem for the Soviet state was probably this: those such as Kosygin and Andropov who recognised weaknesses in the USSR and proposed reform, advocated moderate reform, because they believed in the fundamentals of the system and wanted to modify it, not destroy it. To implement radical reform would undermine the rule of the Party which did not rest on popular consent. Even reforming Party leaders did not want to destroy the Party. Therefore reforms were usually too little too late. Whether real reform at any time between 1964 and 1991 could have saved the USSR in a recognisable form is a moot point.

Source A can clearly be used to support the argument that the regime had failed to solve the problem of declining economic growth, as the key indicators do show decline, although the figures alone give no indication of what measures were actually attempted. Source B might be taken as evidence of complacency, given its optimistic assessment of the USSR – however, the status of the “adviser” is not clear, and we have to consider how representative this source is. Source C is clear about the problems, but does not assert that collapse was inevitable, only that it was increasingly likely.