



General Certificate of Education

AS History 1041

Unit 2: HIS2L

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

Mark Scheme

2009 examination - June series

This mark scheme uses the [new numbering system](#) which is being introduced for examinations from June 2010

The specimen assessment materials are provided to give centres a reasonable idea of the general shape and character of the planned question papers and mark schemes in advance of the operational exams.

Further copies of this Mark Scheme are available to download from the AQA Website: 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 candidates. 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 candidates' historical skills in the context of their knowledge and understanding of History.

The levels of response are a graduated recognition of how candidates have demonstrated their abilities in the Assessment Objectives. Candidates who predominantly address AO1(a) by writing narrative or description will perform at Level 1 or Level 2 depending on its relevance. Candidates 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. Candidates 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 candidates 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 candidate 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)

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 candidates 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 candidates' 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*. Candidates should never be doubly penalised. If a candidate 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 candidate 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

Specimen Mark Scheme for examinations in June 2010 onwards

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 reasons for the Terror in the USSR in the 1930s. (12 marks)

Target: AO2(a)

Levels Mark Scheme

- | | | |
|------------|--|--------------|
| | Nothing written worthy of credit. | 0 |
| L1: | Answers will either briefly paraphrase/describe the content of the two sources or identify simple comparison(s) between the sources. Skills of written communication will be weak. | 1-2 |
| L2: | 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. | 3-6 |
| L3: | Responses will compare the views expressed in the two sources, identifying differences and similarities and using own knowledge to explain and evaluate these. Answers will, for the most part, be clearly expressed. | 7-9 |
| L4 | 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. | 10-12 |

Indicative content

Source A implies that the reasons for the Terror were very much down to Stalin personally. It suggests that Stalin believed that only by getting people to fear him could he be sure of keeping his power – this was much more effective than trying to get people to believe in him. Stalin is shown as obsessed with power and the Terror was his 'personal achievement'.

In contrast, Source B explicitly plays down the idea of Stalin as the sole reason for the Terror. Without completely absolving him from responsibility, Source B looks at the Terror in a wider context, almost implying that there were not conscious motives as such, but rather that the Terror grew out of more impersonal factors: the fact that the 1930s state grew out of a comparatively recent revolution, which created a turmoil which lasted well beyond 1917. Turmoil breeds insecurity and violence. Source B also uses the argument that, once begun, the Terror was on such a scale that it fed on itself – and this was exacerbated by inefficiency and loss of

control, going against the concept of totalitarian state manipulated by one leader, as Stalin's USSR was traditionally represented.

Many candidates will explain the differences by recognising that both sources contain truths. Stalin was notoriously suspicious, was obsessed with power, and clearly was responsible for many aspects of the Terror. He largely initiated it by his response to the Kirov assassination. He personally signed thousands of death warrants and appeared to enjoy purging former close colleagues. He seems to have been not just fearful of 'opposition' but vindictive towards like Kamenev, Zinoviev and Bukharin who had opposed him in the 1920s. It is very likely that he regretted exiling Trotsky, and he did eventually have him hunted down and killed. Stalin did have a sense of history and mission. He, like all Communists, wanted to industrialise Russia as part of a socialist crusade, and was prepared to do so in a very brutal way.

However, there is also some truth in Source B. The Soviet state was born in violence and secured itself between 1917 and 1921 by violence. The economic changes from 1928 involved large-scale violence and resistance. There was inefficiency and local initiative also at work, with local Party organisations eagerly purging in order to meet quotas, or with individuals settling old scores and seeking advancement, often using violence. Stalin was in ultimate control: after all, he stopped the Terror in 1939 – but he did not control everything that was going on.

Candidates should also be aware that there was substance to some of Stalin's fears. There were critics of his economic revolution. The USSR did face dangerous enemies such as Nazi Germany and hostile capitalist powers who had sought the overthrow of the new Bolshevik state already. It made perfect sense for the Soviet state to strengthen itself, although the use of terror was perhaps not inevitable.

Question 1

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

How important was Stalin's use of terror in securing his domination of the USSR in the years 1934 to 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

Indicative content

Information on the impact of the Terror can be gleaned from the sources to some extent. Source A is mostly about Stalin's motives, but certainly suggests that Stalin used fear and terror as a means of eliminating anybody who disagreed with him. Source B refers to 'upheaval' and events spiralling out of control. These factors might be taken as evidence on the one hand that the regime was insecure, and thereby Stalin's personal position was also; or conversely, that his initiation of the Terror suggests that he was very much in control. Stalin did eliminate individuals likely to oppose him, or else they were old colleagues who had once been rivals. New people were promoted who owed everything to Stalin. Source C implies that the impact of the Terror as a means of ensuring his domination had been exaggerated. It emphasises that Stalin was fearful and wanted to assert his control. However, the source states that other soviet officials and citizens took the initiative without Stalin's direction and in any case Stalin could not control everyone's actions. Moreover, terror was not always necessary: people supported Stalin not out of fear but because his regime offered a better future for them – and therefore Terror was not crucial to Stalin's survival.

Clearly there were many Russians who strongly supported the Terror out of ideological commitment, ambition, or fear for their own safety, or for a variety of other reasons. It is also true that Stalin's regime was relatively secure after 1934 not just because of force but for more positive reasons: the USSR was modernising; there were some social and economic benefits as the 1930s progressed; people wanted to support the regime because they were afraid of war and respected a strong leader. There had been advantages in education, medicine etc. Stalin also stayed in power because of propaganda. It is possible to argue either way that Stalin's dominance rested mainly on terror, mainly on other factors, or most likely, a combination of many things.

Question 2

- 03** Explain why, by 1928, the Soviet leadership had decided on collectivisation of agriculture. (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

Collectivism was decided upon for many reasons, not just economic:

- Russian agriculture had never been very productive overall – problems of climate, poor transportation, lack of technology and education, preponderance of small farms etc – larger farm units offered the prospect of more efficient farming
- periodically in the past there had been famines and shortages – the state needed a secure supply of food, especially if the industrialisation programme were to succeed – many more mouths to feed in the planned new industrial towns
- the regime wanted a surplus of food for export, to pay for imports of machinery and technology
- the unsatisfactory dependence of the Communist regime on the whims of the peasantry was starkly brought home by the crisis of 1928, when peasants proved reluctant to sell surplus produce to the state because of low prices and the regime had to resort to requisitioning (the Urals-Siberian experiment)
- collectivisation had always been on the soviet agenda, because small private farming was capitalist, and peasants did not make good socialists
- Lenin and others had promoted collectivisation, but on a voluntary basis, because the new regime could not afford to openly alienate the mass of the population until it felt more secure

- Stalin and many Communists disliked NEP for ideological reasons (shades of capitalism) and were particularly suspicious of peasants with their ‘petty bourgeois mentality’ and desire to get rich – the Kulak phenomenon
- Stalin saw his economic revolution not just as a means of strengthening the economy, but as a means of class war, with Kulaks as part of the enemy
- very importantly, the regime had never been securely established in the countryside. During the NEP there were many complaints and resistance in the villages to Communist dictates, and even local Party officials sometimes took the peasants’ side. Collectivisation, with large units under the control of an official, seemed an opportunity to bring the countryside under Communist control for the first time
- Stalin’s campaign against the peasants could also be tied in with his coming to power and his clash with Bukharin and the Right who favoured a more cautious, less challenging approach to economic development.

Only three of these points need to be well-developed or well-linked to gain full marks.

Question 2

- 04** ‘By 1941, collectivisation had seriously weakened 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

The economic consequences of collectivisation were considerable.

In the early 1930s the disruption caused by collectivisation had a serious impact on agricultural production: grain production did not recover to the 1930 figure until 1935, whilst animal husbandry had not recovered. By 1941 agricultural production was scarcely above the 1930 figure. Many of the most enterprising farmers had been deported, imprisoned or killed. However, state procurements did not decline and the state managed to feed the growing industrial workforce. However, some historians would argue that this was clumsy and inefficient, and that industry did not markedly benefit. The state diverted a lot of valuable resources into agriculture, e.g. into MTS, with comparatively little return. Having a potentially hostile, apathetic agricultural workforce did not suggest that the USSR was stronger by 1941 – although on the other hand the regime had secured control of the countryside for the first time since the Revolution, albeit by force and terror. Some historians believe that during the later 1930s, conditions on the collectives improved, and the degree to which peasants welcomed the invading Germans in 1941 has been exaggerated – such welcomes were more common in non-Russian areas of the USSR, and did not last long.

There may be considerable debate about how strong the USSR actually was in 1941, involving the strength of the industrial economy, the state of defence, the condition of the Red Army after the purges, the impact of the Terror itself, the degree of control exercised by the Party over society through fear, propaganda etc, and indeed the strength and determination of Stalin's own leadership. All these can be legitimately addressed, but the bulk of the answer should be related to the impact of collectivisation on agriculture and the USSR as a whole. A good answer, as well as following a reasoned argument, will be balanced and contain a well-substantiated judgement.

Question 3

05 Explain why Stalin introduced a Five-Year Plan for industry in 1928. (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

Stalin introduced the First Five Year Plan for economic, political, ideological and personal reasons:

- NEP had helped the USSR recover from the Civil War and War, during the communism period, but was showing only limited success in developing the economy
- many Communists disliked NEP for ideological reasons because it allowed private business and ownership
- planning was seen as necessary if the economy were to develop quickly and in line with the state's priorities
- possibly the element of compulsion and centralised planning suited the mindset of a party which already had a tradition of authoritarianism
- a planned economy had been under consideration for some time before 1928, and some planning mechanisms were already in place
- it seemed vital to the USSR's security to focus on heavy industry, and this meant ignoring consumer demand and focusing on what the state saw as priorities
- as Socialists, the Party was committed to industrialisation as a means of creating a Marxist workers' state
- the plan might be seen also as part of Stalin's power struggle within the USSR, as part of 'Socialism in One Country' and confronting those who wanted a more gradual approach to industrial development there was an important element of class warfare in Stalin's enthusiasm for rapid industrialisation.

Note that only three points need to be well-developed or well-linked for full marks.

Question 3

- 06** 'By 1941, the Five-Year Plans had ensured that the USSR was ready to face the challenge of War.'
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

The Five Year Plans might be regarded as having achieved mixed results. There were impressive advances in heavy industry, with massive increases in the production of capital goods like coal and steel, even if all targets were not met. There was a big increase in urbanisation and some evidence of an increased standard of living in the later 1930s. There was also an emphasis on defence, necessary given the dangers from foreign powers, especially Nazi Germany.

On the other hand, there were also weaknesses. Consumer interests were given a low priority compared to heavy industry. The emphasis on quantity was often at the expense of quality:

there was much inefficiency; productivity was often low and industry was very labour-intensive; there were still shortages, mistakes etc. It is possible to debate the success of the plans from an economic standpoint.

It is also possible to debate the extent to which the Plans helped the USSR prepare for war, or whether the USSR was prepared for war in 1941. Probably the USSR could not have fought and won the war without industrialisation, which enabled the USSR to out-produce Germany from the start. Part of the Plans involved building industry in safer areas deep inside the USSR. There was also considerable emphasis on defence in the Plans. It might also be argued that the pressure on the population, which was part of fulfilling the Plan, created a siege mentality which prepared the population well for the rigours and sacrifices of the war years.