



**General Certificate of Education
June 2010**

A2 History 2041

HIS3K

Unit 3K

Triumph and Collapse:

Russia and the USSR, 1941–1991

Final

Mark Scheme

Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation 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.

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 A2

The A2 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 a good historian must be able to combine a range of skills and knowledge. 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 low Level 2 if some comment is included. Candidates who provide more explanation – (AO1(b), supported by the relevant selection of material, AO1(a)) – will perform at Level 2 or low Level 3 depending on their synoptic understanding and linkage of ideas. Candidates who provide explanation with evaluation, judgement and an awareness of historical interpretations will be addressing all 3 AOs (AO1(a); AO1(b); AO2(b)) and will have access to the higher mark ranges.

To obtain an award of Level 3 or higher, candidates will need to address the synoptic requirements of A Level. The open-ended essay questions set are, by nature, synoptic and encourage a range of argument. Differentiation between performance at Levels 3, 4, and 5 therefore depends on how a candidate's knowledge and understanding are combined and used to support an argument and the how that argument is communicated.

The mark scheme emphasises features which measure the extent to which a candidate has begun to '*think like a historian*' and show higher order skills. As indicated in the level criteria, candidates will show their historical understanding by:

- The way the requirements of the question are interpreted
- The quality of the arguments and the range/depth/type of material used in support
- The presentation of the answer (including the level of communication skills)
- The awareness and use of differing historical interpretations
- The degree of independent judgement and conceptual understanding shown

It is expected that A2 candidates will perform to the highest level possible for them and the requirements for Level 5, which demands the highest level of expertise have therefore been made deliberately challenging in order to identify the most able candidates.

CRITERIA FOR MARKING GCE HISTORY:

A2 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:

- Depth and precision in the use of factual information
- Depth and originality in the development of an argument
- The extent of the synoptic links
- 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)
- The way the answer is brought together in the conclusion

June 2010

A2 Unit 3: The State and the People: Change and Continuity

HIS3K: Triumph and Collapse: Russia and the USSR, 1941–1991

Question 1

- 01** To what extent had the USSR recovered from the impact of the Great Patriotic War (1941–1945) by the time of Stalin’s death in 1953? (45 marks)

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

Standard Mark Scheme for Essays at A2

Nothing written worthy of credit. **0**

L1: Answers will display a limited understanding of the demands of the question. They may **either** 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, they may contain some explicit comment but will make few, if any, synoptic links and will have limited accurate and relevant historical support. 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 primarily descriptive with few explicit links to the question **or** they may contain explicit comment but show limited relevant factual support. They will display limited understanding of differing historical interpretations. Historical debate may be described rather than used to illustrate an argument and any synoptic links will be undeveloped. Answers will be coherent but weakly expressed and/or poorly structured. **7-15**

L3: Answers will show a good understanding of the demands of the question. They will provide some assessment, backed by relevant and appropriately selected evidence, which may, however, lack depth. There will be some synoptic links made between the ideas, arguments and information included although these may not be highly developed. There will be some understanding of varying historical interpretations. Answers will be clearly expressed and show reasonable organisation in the presentation of material. **16-25**

L4: Answers will show a very good understanding of the demands of the question. There will be synoptic links made between the ideas, arguments and information included showing an overall historical understanding. There will be a good understanding and use of differing historical interpretations and debate and the answer will show judgement through sustained argument backed by a carefully selected range of precise evidence. Answers will be well-organised and display good skills of written communication. **26-37**

L5: Answers will show a full understanding of the demands of the question. The ideas, arguments and information included will be wide-ranging, carefully chosen and closely interwoven to produce a sustained and convincing answer with a high level of synopticity. Conceptual depth, independent judgement and a mature historical

understanding, informed by a well-developed understanding of historical interpretations and debate, will be displayed. Answers will be very well-structured and fluently written.

38-45

Indicative content

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

- In 1945 the USSR had become a super-power, dominating central and Eastern Europe. But the war had been very costly for the USSR in terms of human casualties, destruction of property, using up of resources etc. By 1953 there had been considerable economic recovery under the Fourth Five-Year Plan, although agriculture recovered much more slowly than industry. There were still shortages in some key areas such as consumer goods. The economy recovered because of various factors, including reparations from eastern Europe, the contribution of convict and prison labour, the hard work of ordinary Russians. But the economy was also inefficient in sectors and was very labour-intensive.
- There was very little recovery psychologically, if at all, from the traumatic war experience. The scarring experience was kept at the forefront of people's minds, and partly explains Soviet isolationism and Cold War politics.
- In some ways Stalinism became more authoritarian, e.g. with Zhdanov's purge of Soviet culture. The purges were re-imposed, in Leningrad and with the 'Doctors' Plot'.
- Stalin's own power and that of the Party had never really been undermined, and were as strong as ever in 1953.
- Some other long-term consequences were not resolved by 1953, e.g. the demographic impact of war (the preponderance of women); the impact on National groups like the Tartars and Volga Germans, displaced during the war; the shortage of labour.

A good answer will probably balance some of these factors – political, economic, social; and also balance the experience of the war itself with developments between 1945 and 1953.

Question 2

- 02** 'Despite the policy of Destalinisation, the main features of Stalinism were still intact in the USSR at the time of Khrushchev's fall from power in 1964.'
Assess the validity of this view. (45 marks)

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

Standard Mark Scheme for Essays at A2

- Nothing written worthy of credit. **0**
- L1:** Answers will display a limited understanding of the demands of the question. They may **either** 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, they may contain some explicit comment but will make few, if any, synoptic links and will have limited accurate and relevant historical support. 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 primarily descriptive with few explicit links to the question **or** they may contain explicit comment but show limited relevant factual support. They will display limited understanding of differing historical interpretations. Historical debate may be described rather than used to illustrate an argument and any synoptic links will be undeveloped. Answers will be coherent but weakly expressed and/or poorly structured. **7-15**
- L3:** Answers will show a good understanding of the demands of the question. They will provide some assessment, backed by relevant and appropriately selected evidence, which may, however, lack depth. There will be some synoptic links made between the ideas, arguments and information included although these may not be highly developed. There will be some understanding of varying historical interpretations. Answers will be clearly expressed and show reasonable organisation in the presentation of material. **16-25**
- L4:** Answers will show a very good understanding of the demands of the question. There will be synoptic links made between the ideas, arguments and information included showing an overall historical understanding. There will be a good understanding and use of differing historical interpretations and debate and the answer will show judgement through sustained argument backed by a carefully selected range of precise evidence. Answers will be well-organised and display good skills of written communication. **26-37**
- L5:** Answers will show a full understanding of the demands of the question. The ideas, arguments and information included will be wide-ranging, carefully chosen and closely interwoven to produce a sustained and convincing answer with a high level of synopticity. Conceptual depth, independent judgement and a mature historical understanding, informed by a well-developed understanding of historical interpretations and debate, will be displayed. Answers will be very well-structured and fluently written. **38-45**
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Indicative content

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

- There were several reasons for Destalinisation, to do with the power struggle after Stalin, but also a genuine concern to motivate the Soviet population more and to carry out some key reforms, for example in the economy. Destalinisation involved an end to arbitrary terror and more attempt to cater for consumers' needs through better supplies of goods and housing.
- Nevertheless, there were limitations to reform. Destalinisation was not an attack on the Party or Soviet 'system', but an attempt at reform *within* the system
- Destalinisation included a cultural 'thaw' – but it was still difficult and dangerous to openly criticise the regime, and there was still persecution, for example against the Church (although many political prisoners were released).
- The fundamentals of the economic structure were still in place: for example the command economy. The agricultural system (mainly collectivisation) was still in place, despite experiments like the Virgin Lands. The centrally planned economy with the main emphasis on heavy industry was still in place. There was still a conservative bureaucracy and resistance to change, since Khrushchev's attempts at decentralisation and Party reforms to reduce privilege were obstructed and only partially carried out.
- The USSR remained an authoritarian one-party state, although arbitrary terror ended and propaganda was not so strident. Khrushchev had no intention of destroying the essentials of Stalinism or fundamentally reforming the USSR, in which he believed. He was simply trying to modify the excesses of Stalinism.
- Therefore the essentials remained: the USSR was still very authoritarian, although slightly less totalitarian than before, since there was more of an attempt to abide by a rule of law, albeit one determined by the Party.

A balanced answer will explore the ways in which the USSR changed and did not change in relation to the essentials of Stalinism, whilst taking account of what the motives and impact of Destalinisation actually were.

Question 3

- 03** To what extent was the failure to maintain economic growth after Stalin's death responsible for the break-up of the USSR in 1991? (45 marks)

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

Standard Mark Scheme for Essays at A2

- Nothing written worthy of credit. **0**
- L1:** Answers will display a limited understanding of the demands of the question. They may **either** 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, they may contain some explicit comment but will make few, if any, synoptic links and will have limited accurate and relevant historical support. 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 primarily descriptive with few explicit links to the question **or** they may contain explicit comment but show limited relevant factual support. They will display limited understanding of differing historical interpretations. Historical debate may be described rather than used to illustrate an argument and any synoptic links will be undeveloped. Answers will be coherent but weakly expressed and/or poorly structured. **7-15**
- L3:** Answers will show a good understanding of the demands of the question. They will provide some assessment, backed by relevant and appropriately selected evidence, which may, however, lack depth. There will be some synoptic links made between the ideas, arguments and information included although these may not be highly developed. There will be some understanding of varying historical interpretations. Answers will be clearly expressed and show reasonable organisation in the presentation of material. **16-25**
- L4:** Answers will show a very good understanding of the demands of the question. There will be synoptic links made between the ideas, arguments and information included showing an overall historical understanding. There will be a good understanding and use of differing historical interpretations and debate and the answer will show judgement through sustained argument backed by a carefully selected range of precise evidence. Answers will be well-organised and display good skills of written communication. **26-37**
- L5:** Answers will show a full understanding of the demands of the question. The ideas, arguments and information included will be wide-ranging, carefully chosen and closely interwoven to produce a sustained and convincing answer with a high level of synopticity. Conceptual depth, independent judgement and a mature historical understanding, informed by a well-developed understanding of historical interpretations and debate, will be displayed. Answers will be very well-structured and fluently written. **38-45**

Indicative content

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

A good answer is likely to be one which analyses Soviet economic progress between 1953 and 1991, then determines how significant economic issues were in relation to the break-up of the USSR, plus the extent to which other factors might have contributed.

- The Stalinist economic system had strengths but also several weaknesses, such as unresponsiveness to popular demands, obsolescence, obsession with targets rather than quality, discouragement of initiative, failure to modernise agriculture, low labour productivity. Khrushchev tinkered with the economy, but his economic reforms were either flawed or obstructed. Kosygin's reforms came to nothing. The Brezhnev era was largely one of complacency and developing stagnation. Even Gorbachev, who recognised the need for reform, dithered over the solutions, and could never really decide what economic model he wanted to follow.
- The weaknesses were evident in the pattern of growth. Defence and the space race were drains on the economy. The various reforms were half-hearted and ineffectual overall. The post-1945 recovery was not sustained for long. Growth rates fell significantly in the 1970s until there was a real crisis of stagnation or negative growth by the 1980s. Gorbachev lacked the skills or understanding to resolve things, nor did he have the necessary support. Some interpretations claim that the system by the 1980s was incapable of being reformed from above.
- Other factors in the break-up of the USSR were clearly significant: the resistance of the Party to change; the population had been too controlled for so long that it could not respond to initiatives like *Glasnost*; nationalism emerged as a dangerously disruptive factor; economic reform depended upon political reform, which was never forthcoming in any meaningful sense; and virtually no reformer was prepared to attempt to dismantle the economic system.

Although good answers will be balanced, the issue of economic growth should be the basis of discussion, and 'other' factors should be considered in relation to the importance of economic developments – since, for example, one of the things which fuelled rising Nationalism in the 1980s was economic downturn in some of the Republics.