



**General Certificate of Education
June 2012**

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

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

Further copies of this Mark Scheme are available to download from the AQA Website: www.aqa.org.uk

Copyright © 2012 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

COPYRIGHT

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered schools and colleges for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to schools and colleges to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

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 students. 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 students' historical skills in the context of their knowledge and understanding of History.

The levels of response are a graduated recognition of how students have demonstrated their abilities in the Assessment Objectives. Students who predominantly address AO1(a) by writing narrative or description will perform at Level 1 or low Level 2 if some comment is included. Students 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. Students 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, students 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 student'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 student has begun to *'think like a historian'* and show higher order skills. As indicated in the level criteria, students 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 students 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 students.

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 students might refer to (knowledge) and some of the approaches and ideas they might develop (skills). It is not, however, prescriptive and should only be used to exemplify the generic mark scheme.

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

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

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

Criteria for deciding marks within a level:

- 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 2012

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 was Stalin's leadership responsible for the Soviet victory in the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945? (45 marks)

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

Generic 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 an 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 good understanding of the demands of the question. They will be mostly analytical in approach and will show some ability to link ideas/arguments and information and offer some judgement. Answers will show an understanding of different ways of interpreting material and may refer to historical debate. Answers will be well-organised and display good skills of written communication. **26-37**
- L5:** Answers will show a very good 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 well-structured and fluently written. **38-45**
-

Indicative content

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

Students will need to assess the contribution to victory of Stalin's leadership and balance this against other factors.

Students may refer to some of the following material in support of the view that Stalin's leadership was particularly important:

- after initial hesitation, Stalin's leadership was strong and unflinching
- Stalin made good appointments, e.g. Zhukov, and set up powerful institutions such as Stavka
- Stalinist propaganda, e.g. appealing to Mother Russia, was masterful.

Nevertheless, there are a number of other factors to consider:

- Stalin also made mistakes, especially early in the war
- other factors were very important in the Soviet victory, such as the strength of the Soviet war economy and the resistance of the Red Army and ordinary Russians.

Furthermore, students may consider factors such as:

- the mistakes made by the Germans (e.g. failing to focus on Moscow) in contributing to Soviet victory
- The role of other factors such as weather, Allied support for the USSR.
NB It is not necessary for students to include such 'other factors' as suggested above in order to gain full marks.

In conclusion, students may well conclude that Stalin's leadership was a crucial factor in victory, but there were other factors also.

Question 2

- 02** To what extent did the USSR achieve economic growth under the regimes of Khrushchev and Brezhnev? (45 marks)

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

Generic 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 an 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 good understanding of the demands of the question. They will be mostly analytical in approach and will show some ability to link ideas/arguments and information and offer some judgement. Answers will show an understanding of different ways of interpreting material and may refer to historical debate. Answers will be well-organised and display good skills of written communication. **26-37**
- L5:** Answers will show a very good 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 well-structured and fluently written. **38-45**
-

Indicative content

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

Students will need to explain the extent to which there was economic growth during the period 1953 or 1956 (by which time Khrushchev was established) and 1982.

Students may refer to some of the following material in support of the argument that there was economic growth during this period:

- under Khrushchev's economic plans there were some impressive gains, including in regions previously neglected but which now received substantial investment. Some sectors like chemicals, the military and space did see growth in investment and real gains. There was further increased investment under Brezhnev
- there were more consumer goods produced for the Soviet population
- grain production improved significantly up to 1958
- foreign trade increased under Khrushchev – mainly with the Communist Bloc.

Nevertheless, there are a number of other factors to consider:

- some of Khrushchev's earlier successes such as agriculture were reversed after 1958, and the growth in areas like chemicals were achieved at the expense of shortages in other key areas like steel
- the faults in the Stalinist model such as inefficiency, inflexibility, lack of attention to quality – all restricted growth throughout the period overall
- attempts to improve efficiency and growth (e.g. the Kosygin reforms) were obstructed or allowed to peter out
- returns were poor – e.g. investment in agriculture tripled under Brezhnev, without a corresponding rise in output, leading to increasing problems such as more dependence on imports
- by 1982, compared to the 1960s and continuing through the 1970s, there was a steady and significant fall in key indicators such as national income, industrial and agricultural production, labour productivity and even real incomes per head.

In conclusion, students may balance up the degree to which there were successes and failures in economic growth, although they are likely to conclude that there was decline and even stagnation overall – partly because of inherent flaws in the economic system throughout the whole period, and partly due to a reluctance for radical reform, or when reform was attempted, a failure to carry it through convincingly.

Question 3

- 03** How far was political stagnation in the USSR, in the years 1956 to 1991, due to the Soviet regime's fear of change? (45 marks)

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

Generic 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 an 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 good understanding of the demands of the question. They will be mostly analytical in approach and will show some ability to link ideas/arguments and information and offer some judgement. Answers will show an understanding of different ways of interpreting material and may refer to historical debate. Answers will be well-organised and display good skills of written communication. **26-37**
- L5:** Answers will show a very good 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 well-structured and fluently written. **38-45**
-

Indicative content

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

Students will need to explain the 'political stagnation' and what caused this in the years 1956–1991.

Students may refer to some of the following material in support of the view that there was political stagnation and that the regime feared change:

- there was increasing political stagnation after 1956, and especially under Brezhnev, in the sense that higher up the Party ranks there were few changes of personnel and the leadership grew increasingly older. There were few changes either in Russia or the other Republics. There was a change under Gorbachev, with many Party leaders, e.g. at regional level being replaced, and then there were radical changes in the Party and political changes with the reforms of the later 1980s which destroyed the Party's monopoly of power
- there was obstructionism within the Party and bureaucracy to Khrushchev's political and administrative reforms – there was a fear of change for ideological reasons, but also a simple dislike by Party bureaucrats of change and/or a desire to keep their privileges
- Khrushchev was replaced by a conservative, Brezhnev, who along with his ageing colleagues was unlikely to rock the boat. As before, conservatives in the Party resisted any attempt to alter their privileges and clamped down on political or ideological views which underlay the existing system
- further attempts at reform, e.g. Kosygin, petered out or were squashed, until reformers like Yeltsin emerged towards the end of the period
- any attempt at dissidence or reform of the political system was suppressed before the late 1980s
- although Gorbachev did (reluctantly) reform the Party, he faced obstructionism, and his reforms actually helped to fatally weaken the Party.

Other factors to consider could include:

- even before 1953 the Communist regime had shown itself very conservative politically and fearful of change
- it was not just overt opposition to change, but the huge bureaucracy bred conservatism and apathy, and by the 1990s the Party was simply losing credibility with many Soviet citizens
- political change could be dangerous – an obvious example being the Republics, where once reform began in the 1990s, a can of worms was opened, and increased nationalist discontent rapidly undermined the USSR in addition to its existing problems.

In conclusion, students may well argue that there was definitely 'political stagnation' until the late 1980s when uncertain change began to take hold; and also a reluctance to carry out significant reforms, because the Stalinist system seemed to have served the regime well, e.g. in war, and too many people had a stake in the existing system to want to change it, until the USSR was almost in its death throes.

Converting marks into UMS marks

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

UMS conversion calculator: www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion