



General Certificate in Education

A2 History 6041

Alternative F Unit 4

Mark Scheme

2007 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.

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

Copyright © 2007 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

COPYRIGHT

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered centres 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 centres 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.

CRITERIA FOR MARKING GCE HISTORY:

A2 EXAMINATION PAPERS

General Guidance for Examiners

A: INTRODUCTION

The AQA's 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 specification. These cover the normal range of skills, knowledge and understanding which have been addressed by A2 level candidates for a number of years.

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

The 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 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 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.

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) and in deciding on a mark within a particular level of response (Section C).

B: 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.

C: 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.

June 2007

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 useful are **Sources B** and **C** in explaining the impact of Communist agricultural policy in the years between the 1917 Revolution and 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

Source B gives some indication of the impact of War Communism on agriculture in its early stages. There is some indication perhaps of coherent planning, in that there is a 'plan' for these particular provinces. In terms of crude impact, the most noticeable feature is the fact that the success in getting deliveries from the peasantry varies considerably from province to province, whilst overall the success rate is poor. This might be taken as reinforcing own knowledge about how there was peasant resistance to the requisitioning which took place under War Communism, along with the general chaos which prevailed at a time of Civil War and at a time when the Communists were still trying to assert their authority. On the other hand, the source has many limitations in terms of assessing impact: the table only shows the results in some provinces; we do not know how the information was collated and how accurate it is; we do not know how realistic the targets were, and why the success rate varies; above all, the table gives only figures, and of a particular crop – there is no evidence of the actual impact on the peasantry, the extent to which the policy was successful in feeding the country etc. Candidates should know from own knowledge that the policy was crude and brutal, and unpopular with peasants, although it did at least help ensure that the Red Army was fed, and to some extent the urban population also. It is debatable as to how far the policy helped the Reds win the Civil War, although it is clear that overall the policy was economically unsustainable, and hence its replacement by NEP. But a lot of this cannot be read into this source.

Source C is a useful first-hand account, although it refers only to a very specific period, the process of collectivisation which had recently begun. It can therefore tell us nothing about the longer term economic, social or political impact of the policy. It does suggest the serious conditions which prevailed, e.g. the reference to the threat of famine. On the other hand, it is a

very partial account, which appears to justify the policy – either because of the author’s ideological standpoint or because it is too early to assess the dramatic impact. Like Source B, there is useful information, but only of a very limited and partial picture, and neither source deals with other major developments such as the recovery of agriculture under NEP, the relationship between agriculture and industry, especially in the 1930s, the modifications (e.g. private plots), famine etc. Reference to these ‘limitations’ of the sources will probably be developed through the candidates’ own knowledge.

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

‘Weaknesses in the agricultural sector completely undermined Russian and Soviet economic progress in the period 1881 to 1985.’

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 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

This is a synoptic question and candidates’ responses should be rewarded for referring to aspects of change and continuity over a period of at least 100 years, as detailed in the specification for this particular Alternative, and to an appropriate range of factors as exemplified by the indicative content for each particular question.

Source A suggests weaknesses in the agricultural sector prior to the Revolution: a dissatisfied peasantry; rural overpopulation; land hunger – none of which could be healthy for economic progress. Source B suggests that the Communists' first agricultural targets, however realistic or ambitious, were not met. Source C, with references to "famine", "drastic action", a concern with ends rather than means, and major transformations in the countryside, suggests turbulence, which again is unlikely to be healthy for agricultural development. Source D, an official policy produced much later, towards the end of the Soviet regime, still talks about several major problems in agriculture. Whilst identifying bureaucratic faults as well as a host of other problems, the source still reflects the official position that a planned economy is not inherently the problem, it is just not being managed effectively.

Therefore all the sources indicate major problems in agriculture, whilst highlighting only certain areas or particular periods of time. Own knowledge should fill the gaps. The question can legitimately be approached in two ways: either by focusing very much on agriculture; or by placing agriculture in a broader context, by looking at agriculture in relation to the Russian and Soviet economy as a whole.

The obvious points about agricultural deficiencies are: the backwardness of agriculture throughout the period; the limited nature of agricultural reform before 1914, including the limited impact of Stolypin's reforms; the chaos caused by war and revolution; the negative impact of War Communism; the further disruption of collectivisation after the recovery of NEP; the destruction of the productive kulaks, the continuing low yields and poor status of rural areas; the catastrophe of WW2 and slow recovery; the continued problems of agriculture despite reforms carried out by Khrushchev and Brezhnev in particular. In terms of the wider economy there were successes: for example, the ruthless imposition of Party control in the 1930s did ensure that the towns were fed and that extra workers were available for industry, without which the Five Year Plans could never have industrialised the USSR. On the other hand, failures in agriculture contributed to the long standing stagnation in the Soviet economy and indeed to the break up of the USSR.

At Level 1, answers will probably be based on unsupported generalisations and assertions, or based on basic description. Level 2 answers will probably also be predominantly descriptive and very unbalanced in their coverage of the 100 year period. At Level 3 there should be some focus on continuity and analysis in terms of the specific question. However, the answer may well lack overall balance and depth. At Level 4 there should be fuller treatment of the whole period, with reasonable attempts to relate agriculture to the issue of 'progress', however this is defined, and dealing specifically with the concept of 'completely undermined'. Level 5 answers will contain a developed and sustained judgement, with a good level of supporting evidence and possibly showing a good perspective across the period as a whole.

Section B

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 almost to 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 extent of the political and social impact of the Stalinist Terror on the USSR in the years to 1941. (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's terror can be taken as beginning with the 1928 Shakty Trial, the mass expulsions from the Party for a variety of crimes or 'disciplinary' reasons in 1929 and 1933, the Kirov Murder in 1934, or the so-called 'Great Terror' proper in 1936. It may also be taken as including the war against the peasantry which accompanied collectivisation and various other factors such as intimidation of the workforce, the gulag empire and so on. In other words, the interpretation of "Terror" can be flexible. The political impact can include the strengthening of the powers of the secret police (the Kirov Decrees), the strengthening of Stalin's own position, the intimidation of real or potential opposition, the strengthening of Party control both in the towns and countryside, the impact on the Army of the decimation of the military leadership. At the same time as the overall power of the Party appeared to be strengthened, paradoxically it decreased: since at the same time as a new bureaucracy developed, Stalin increasingly by-passed the Party - the Politburo ceased to meet, and Stalin gave orders direct to the police. Old Communists were purged. The purging of foreign Communists, and the subsequent strengthening of Stalin's position as leader of world Communism, along with the impact on foreign relations, can be credited although it is not essential. Legitimate discussion of the extent to which the purges reflected a strengthening of central control, or reflected the activities of local Communists away from Moscow (e.g. the Arch Getty thesis), should be rewarded, but again is not essential.

The social impact of the Terror is inevitably bound up with the Stalinist social revolution. It can include the social costs: millions of deaths and imprisonments, the impact of the gulag empire, the dislocation caused by deportations, the use of peasants as industrial workers, and so on. Society was atomised, with families afraid of neighbours and friends, and even of their own members. Paradoxically the regime reversed the 1920s trend towards lessening the importance of the family unit. There was the accompanying propaganda and siege mentality created. At the same time the Terror fed off the genuine idealism of ardent Communists. Stalin allowed the privileges of a new elite to rise, including the shock workers. The traditional socialist goal of egalitarianism was attacked: skilled workers and managers gained privileges. Educational disparities widened. The new Constitution promised social freedoms, but these were ignored. The undermining of religion continued. The impact of Stalin's Terror on the population's mentality is difficult to ascertain precisely, because of the regime's control of the media and the impossibility of expressing 'unorthodox' opinion, but any reasoned discussion of the Stalinist Revolution should be credited.

Level 1 answers will be very generalised. Level 2 answers will probably be very narrative based or descriptive, e.g. with basic descriptions of the Terror with limited evidence or evaluation. At Level 3, answers should be reasonably wide ranging, should certainly consider both the political and social impact, although not necessarily to the same extent, and there should be some evaluation, although not all aspects will be covered. At Level 4 there should be clear and relevant evaluation, and the answer should be reasonably wide ranging on the impact. Level 5

answers will additionally show a good depth and range of evidence and a well substantiated judgement.

Question 3

Assess the relative importance of military and economic factors in securing the USSR's success in war against Germany between 1941 and 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

Economic factors were crucial. The five year plans had already created a centralised model which was adaptable to the war situation from the start. There had been an emphasis on rearmament before 1941, and many factories had been built in the less vulnerable east – others were moved there once the war started. This was managed by a Committee of Evacuation (June 1941), although there is an unresolved debate about how effectively the process was managed and what exactly the exact impact of this was. Over 1500 industrial enterprises had been moved east by November, along with ten million workers and evacuees. This process almost certainly reduced output at first, but the benefits were felt in 1942 (e.g. tank production rose by 270 per cent). The USSR had huge reserves of workers as well as soldiers, and had no compunction about using women and slave labour. The centralised economy, on a total war footing from the start, easily out produced Germany, and was aided by Allied help (e.g. over 18,000 planes and over 10,000 tanks were imported from Allied countries during the war, with payment deferred until after the war.) The workforce carried out incredible feats, despite the economic devastation and costs caused by the war. Women now made up 53 per cent of the workforce, with even more on the farms. The emergency labour laws of 1940-2 squeezed maximum effort from the population. The commitment of the working population to the war rose from 11-13 per cent in 1940 to 45-48 per cent by 1943. Although the focus on war mobilisation upset the balance of the economy to a dangerous level in 1941, the balance had largely been rectified by 1942, although problems remained, such as the low priority given to agriculture. By 1944 the USSR produced 4 times more aircraft and ten times more tanks than in 1940, a far greater rate than other combatants, and based on a smaller workforce and capital stock than before the war. From 1943 some sort of balance was achieved again, and economic expansion was more controlled. During 1944 the liberated territories began to contribute significantly to the economy, and even agriculture showed signs of recovery.

Military factors include the bravery of the armed forces, their increasing professionalism, their ability to absorb huge losses, the superiority of much of their weaponry, the skill of their commanders. The Red Army was large, and although overall it was less well equipped and trained than its opponents, reforms were being implemented after the disastrous Russo-Finnish War. The Red Army proved formidable after the devastating experience of the early months when the Soviets were caught unprepared by the German attack and there was a temporary paralysis of leadership. The Red Army became not just a 'brave' army (reinforced by fear and ferocious discipline as well as patriotism and hatred of the enemy), but Stalin reduced Party interference (e.g. the commissars) in the army, which was allowed to operate as a professional

force. Stalin promoted some very able commanders, notably Zhukov, and although mistakes were made, Stalin did listen to those that proved themselves. The unified military command proved far more effective than, for example, the disjointed German military leadership subject to Hitler's whims. Soviet tactics were sometimes extraordinarily wasteful of men, but they found the reserves to keep going.

Clearly, both military and economic factors were vitally important and interdependent throughout the war. It is possible to attempt a reasoned, relative judgement on the Soviet victory, or a balanced argument that focuses on the interdependence of the two factors.

Candidates may also deal with other aspects, such as political factors (e.g. Stalin's leadership), German strategic errors, Germany's failure to prepare for a longer war, German failure to utilise potential anti-Stalinist feeling more successfully, Germany's lack of a coherent leadership given Hitler's interference, and so on. Whilst these factors may be credited, the bulk of a good answer should focus on the Soviet contribution.

Level 1 answers will be very generalised. Level 2 answers are likely to be descriptive or narrative based, e.g. with basic descriptions of the war, with limited evidence of the various factors or evaluation. At Level 3, answers should be reasonably wide ranging, addressing military and economic factors, although not necessarily to the same depth. There should be at least some evaluation of the impact on the outcome of the war, although not all aspects will be covered. At Level 4 there should be some clear evaluation, and the answer should be reasonably wide ranging on the various factors leading to Soviet victory. Level 5 answers will probably show an impressive range or depth of evidence and a substantiated judgement.

Question 4

'Khrushchev's fall from power in 1963 owed less to his own shortcomings than to the impossibility of modifying Stalinism in the USSR.'

Assess the validity of this statement.

(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

Khrushchev had qualities which might be regarded as shortcomings, certainly within the Soviet system. He sometimes appeared exhibitionist or irrational in behaviour, with a populist streak, and this did not go down well with conservative colleagues in the leadership. Certainly he made enemies at home and abroad. Yet he was also a skilled and an able politician, as evident in the way he rose in influence under Stalin and survived frequent purges, partly by remaining unobtrusive. He had shown himself ruthless when necessary, and skilfully outmanoeuvred his rivals during the post-Stalin collective leadership period. He recognised that there were problems in the USSR which needed rectifying, and was prepared to face them, unlike some colleagues, although he was certainly not a liberal. His expose of Stalin in 1956 was brave, but also limited in so far as he blamed Stalin for excesses and mistakes rather than the Party – but that was not surprising, since Khrushchev wanted to reform the system, not overthrow it – could this really be described as a “shortcoming”? De-Stalinisation, within its limits, was a brave move

by Soviet standards, but Khrushchev underestimated the likely impact, especially in the satellite states. On the one hand he relaxed the gulag system, but on the other hand he fomented an anti-religious campaign – so there were contradictions. He wanted to improve the lives of ordinary citizens, but could only tinker with the system. Experiments such as increasing the number of state farms were only partially successful, some such as the Virgin Lands scheme were failures – and this from a man regarded as an agricultural expert. His policies of decentralisation in industry were ambitious and only partially successful. Many of his ideas were well meaning but did not take account sufficiently of complexities or the fundamental rigidity of the Stalinist system. Successes as in the space programme hid wider failures. Attempts to decentralise the Party were unpopular, and yet he needed the Party to implement his reforms – instead the Party obstructed Khrushchev. He upset the military, his previous supporters, by pushing for more emphasis on nuclear weapons at the expense of conventional forces. His foreign policy was mostly unsuccessful. He was adventurous in the Cuban Missile crisis, but was then regarded as backing down. The break with China damaged his reputation.

However, in many respects Khrushchev faced an impossible situation. The Stalinist system he inherited was very difficult to change economically or politically, as Gorbachev found later. The Party was conservative, inflexible, reluctant to change, but in a one party state, only the Party could implement reforms in a meaningful way. Although Khrushchev opened new lines of thinking such as peaceful co-existence, the chances of securing widespread acceptance were very limited, and Khrushchev was not a dictator like Stalin. In fact he left himself dangerously exposed to removal in a way that could never have happened with Stalin.

Therefore any reasoned argument should be credited, depending to a large extent on candidates' assessments of "shortcomings" and what "modifying Stalinism" really entailed.

Level 1 answers will be very generalised. Level 2 answers are likely to be descriptive or narrative based, e.g. with basic descriptions of what Khrushchev did, with limited evidence or evaluation. At Level 3, answers should be reasonably wide ranging, considering at least some of the "shortcomings" and Khrushchev's policies, with some evaluation, although not all aspects will be covered. At Level 4 there will be some clear evaluation of the relationship between Khrushchev's aims, personality and policies, and the answer will be supported by adequate evidence. Level 5 answers will additionally include an impressive array of evidence and a well substantiated judgement.