



**General Certificate of Education  
June 2013**

**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](http://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 students. 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 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 Level 2 depending on its relevance. Students 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. Students 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 students 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 student performing at the highest AS level is already well prepared for the demands of A2.

## **CRITERIA FOR MARKING GCE HISTORY:**

### ***A2 EXAMINATION PAPERS***

#### **General Guidance for Examiners (to accompany Level Descriptors)**

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##### **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

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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 did dissatisfaction within the Communist Party undermine the Khrushchev regime? (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**
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## 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 extent to which dissatisfaction within the Communist Party undermined the Khrushchev regime.

Students may refer to some of the following material in support of the view that this dissatisfaction was significant in undermining the regime:

- Khrushchev's 1956 'Secret Speech' created an internal Party opposition and some dissatisfaction within the population at large both from those who felt that he had not gone far enough in his denunciation of Stalin, to those in contrast who would not accept his criticisms. Upsetting the latter group left Khrushchev vulnerable in particular should his own regime run into difficulties
- Khrushchev's Party and administrative reforms – abolishing central ministries and devolving economic decision-making to regional bodies – although gaining support from some local Party apparatchiks who gained more power, upset many Party officials who subverted the reforms, so that power gradually reverted back to the centre
- in 1957 an internal palace coup against Khrushchev, led by Malenkov and others in the Anti-Party group which opposed the dominance of the Party over the Government, was narrowly defeated with the help of Zhukov and the army, showing Khrushchev's vulnerability
- Khrushchev's power was weakened considerably by his perceived failures in foreign policy, notably China and Cuba
- the Novocherkassk demonstrations, bloodily suppressed, undermined Khrushchev's attempts to raise food prices, an action which he did not repeat
- the Hungarian Revolution, though crushed, led to further questioning of Khrushchev's DeStalinisation
- Khrushchev's failed agricultural reforms also undermined his reputation
- failed policies and disquiet over Khrushchev's style, which combined a certain crudeness, bluster and extrovert streak, eventually led leading colleagues to sack him.

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

- when there was obvious opposition to official policies under Khrushchev, the dissatisfaction came from Party bureaucrats who disliked the reforms and wanted to protect their own positions, but they were not opposing the Soviet system – only Khrushchev's personal rule. Therefore there was very little danger of the actual system, still with many Stalinist elements intact, being destroyed
- most citizens accepted that their lives were gradually improving and the arbitrary government actions of Stalin's days had gone – only the few overt dissidents had reason to fear, and they had very little support in the population at large
- there was the beginning of dissidence but most dissidents themselves were not trying to overthrow the regime, just 'humanise' it
- opposition to Soviet policies was stronger outside the USSR, but the nature of the USSR's still 'closed society' kept the regime reasonably immune from serious criticism from its own people

In conclusion, students may well conclude that Khrushchev's regime was undermined mainly because Khrushchev seriously upset many influential Party colleagues by his style and policies. Even so, dissatisfaction was with Khrushchev personally rather than with the system itself.

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**Question 2**

- 02** To what extent did opposition to Gorbachev from hard-line Communists inside the USSR cause economic and political instability in the years 1985 to 1991? (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**
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## 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 Gorbachev's loss of hardline Communist support furthered economic and political decline in the period 1985–1991.

Students may refer to some of the following material in support of the argument that Gorbachev's failure to satisfy hardline Communists was crucial during this period:

- even though some of Gorbachev's initial reforms were relatively modest, there was already a tradition (under Khrushchev) of the bureaucratic Party machine resisting change, even when it was needed, because the Party was conservative and wanted to keep its privileges, or else its members were ideologically committed to what were seen as tried and trusted hardline policies which had worked well in the past and so should not be changed
- not all hardline Communists in the leadership supported Gorbachev's appointment in the first place
- Gorbachev's major changes in the administration were bound to create resentment from those sacked as well as creating opportunities for their replacements
- hardline Communists were disturbed by what were seen as radical policies, e.g. the attacks on corruption and the policies of glasnost and perestroika
- Gorbachev's failure to adopt a clear and consistent policy of economic reform and his appearance sometimes of dithering, did not endear him to hardliners seeking clear leadership, as well as causing frustration among radicals
- Gorbachev increasingly lost support from the hardline conservative Party elites in the Republics, and this threatened the Union
- hardliners were shocked by the political reforms which followed the 1988 19<sup>th</sup> party Conference – direct elections to the Congress of People's Deputies, the loss of the Party's role in supervising the economy, and the reorganisation and slimming down of the Party organisation. As a result, the Party steadily lost its authority throughout many regions of the USSR
- the last throw of the dice by the hardliners was the 1991 coup – and although Gorbachev survived, his weak response to the coup further discredited him and culminated in the break-up of the USSR.

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

- the decline in the political and economic stability of the USSR was not just to do with problems with the hardline Communists – Radicals were equally disillusioned with the pace of reform, with Gorbachev's limited understanding of the economy, and with the inconsistent and changing policies
- some of the problems faced by Gorbachev – especially economic decline – were so long-standing and serious that even a more coherent policy would probably not have worked; equally, although Gorbachev's Nationalities policy was flawed, he was having to deal with a potential time-bomb that had built up over a long period before 1985
- Yeltsin in particular took advantage of the increasingly fluid situation to attack Gorbachev and promote his own radical agenda inside Russia, which in large part made the break-up of the Union almost inevitable.

In conclusion, students may balance up the degree to which Gorbachev's failure to satisfy hardline Communists was a major factor in the continuing political and economic decline of the USSR after 1985, against other factors such as radical opposition to Gorbachev, Gorbachev's own weaknesses and limited understanding of some issues, and the enormous economic and political (including the Nationalities) problems which mushroomed once the initial reform process began. Students will probably conclude that all these factors were significant, but will debate which were the most telling in accelerating the decline.

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**Question 3**

- 03** 'A speedy recovery followed by relentless decline.'  
Assess the validity of this view of Soviet industrial development in the years 1945 to 1985. (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**
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**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 changing nature of industrial development during the period 1945–1985.

Students may refer to some of the following material in support of the view that an initial speedy industrial recovery after 1945 was then followed by relentless decline:

- the enormous efforts cajoled and forced out of the population did lead to rapid industrial recovery after the War – and in line with former Stalinist priorities, the focus again was on heavy industrial and capital goods. As a result there were impressive gains under the Fourth Five-Year Plan. In several respects, the pre-war performance had been equalled or even exceeded by 1950, e.g. in coal and steel, although the economy was about one quarter of the US one in growth and wealth
- the recovery masked irregularities in performance. Some sectors like consumer goods were still relatively neglected; even defence investment in 1946–50 was half that of the pre-war period, despite the rapid development of some aspects like nuclear arms; some sectors received favourable treatment in allocation of resources, investment and expertise
- Khrushchev recognised the need for industrial reform, especially to overcome both the shortages and poor quality of consumer goods, and the bureaucratic tangles. Hence much of his reform was about reorganising structure and management, through schemes such as more decentralisation, although central planning was still in place. There was still confusion, and the Fifth Five-Year Plan was replaced by a Seven-Year Plan. There were some big increases in production, in steel, coal, oil and electricity, although not all targets were met. There were still deficiencies in some areas like chemicals, and many resources were put into projects such as the space race, which was a prestige project to compete with the USA. Khrushchev tinkered with the industrial system rather than radically reforming it, and it could be argued that industrial development overall had at best begun to stand still, and possibly had started to decline
- under Brezhnev, industrial growth slowed and the industrial economy began to stagnate relentlessly. The economy remained technologically inefficient; investment increasingly went into agriculture at the expense of industry; some areas like the transport infrastructure were comparatively neglected; the regime failed to efficiently exploit new resources in areas like Siberia; targets were too often short-term; and there was no serious discussion of economic alternatives, only tinkering in an attempt to improve aspects such as worker productivity
- the economy was poorly equipped to meet major challenges in the early 1970s, notably the world recession, despite the fact that the USSR was a major oil producer. There was a steady and relentless decline in the productivity of capital and labour. The Soviet official figures for average growth rate of material products declined from over 10% in the 1950s to 7% in the 1960s to 4.9% in the 1970s to under 4% in the 1980s. Even so, these figures are probably very inflated. In the late 1970s industrial growth may well have stopped and actually gone into overall decline, certainly by 1982. The gap in favour of advanced Western economies was clearly growing at the expense of the USSR. The USSR notably failed to exploit the new technological revolution, and simply could not adapt its bureaucratic methods.

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

- despite the rapid industrial recovery evident under Stalin, the industrial economy after 1945 still exhibited the same faults as in the 1930s: an obsession with targets; waste of resources; inflexibility; over-centralisation; often poor productivity. The growth in output was achieved by muscle power, with workers working flat out, and the gains could not be sustained as economic needs became more sophisticated
- therefore Brezhnev did not create new problems, but his regime signally failed to recognise the seriousness of existing ones and did nothing fundamental to change a system that had outlived its usefulness. It was a system that had been effective both in the 1930s and after the war in terms of 'extensive' growth, rapidly mobilising basic resources and aiming to fulfil a limited number of specified and basic goals. But it was very badly geared to 'intensive' growth, which requires increasing the efficiency of existing industrial resources. This necessitated the flexibility and radical thinking which were notably absent
- even the things in which the economy had shown success, especially the mobilising of large numbers of extra workers, mainly former peasants and women, became a problem by the 1970s as the pool of extra available labour ran out and there were not the increases in productivity to compensate for this.

In conclusion, students may well argue that the relentless decline in most aspects of industrial growth was not only obvious but almost inevitable, given that no Soviet leader, even those less blinkered than others, had the imagination or will to change a system which had seemed to serve the regime well under Stalin in the 1930s, especially in war, and was extolled in propaganda as the method by which the USSR had become the world's first socialist state; and too many in positions of influence had too strong a stake in the existing system to want to change it, until the USSR was almost in its death throes.