
AS HISTORY

Paper 2N Revolution and Dictatorship: Russia and the Soviet Union, 1917–1929

Mark scheme

Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer 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 associates 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 associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate 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, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Assessment Writer.

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 from aqa.org.uk

AS History Paper 2 Specimen Mark Scheme

2N Revolution and Dictatorship: Russia and the Soviet Union, 1917–1929

Section A

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|---|---|---|------------|
| 0 | 1 | With reference to these sources and your understanding of the historical context, which of these two sources is more valuable in explaining why Trotsky failed to win the power struggle? | [25 marks] |
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Target: AO2

Analyse and evaluate appropriate source material, primary and/or contemporary to the period, within the historical context.

Generic Mark Scheme

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| L5: | Answers will display a very good understanding of the value of the sources in relation to the issue identified in the question. They will evaluate the sources thoroughly in order to provide a well-substantiated conclusion. The response demonstrates a very good understanding of context. | 21-25 |
| L4: | Answers will provide a range of relevant of well-supported comments on the value of the sources for the issue identified in the question. There will be sufficient comment to provide a supported conclusion but not all comments will be well-substantiated, and judgements will be limited. The response demonstrates a good understanding of context. | 16-20 |
| L3: | The answer will provide some relevant comments on the value of the sources and there will be some explicit reference to the issue identified in the question. Judgements will however, be partial and/or thinly supported. The response demonstrates an understanding of context. | 11-15 |
| L2: | The answer will be partial. There may be either some relevant comments on the value of one source in relation to the issue identified in the question or some comment on both, but lacking depth and have little, if any, explicit link to the issue identified in the question. The response demonstrates some understanding of context. | 6-10 |
| L1: | The answer will either describe source content or offer stock phrases about the value of the source. There may be some comment on the issue identified in the question but it is likely to be limited, unsubstantiated and unconvincing. The response demonstrates limited understanding of context. | 1-5 |
| | Nothing worthy of credit. | 0 |

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 must deploy knowledge of the historical context to show an understanding of the relationship between the sources and the issues raised in the question, when assessing the significance of provenance, the arguments deployed in the sources and the tone and emphasis of the sources. Descriptive answers which fail to do this should be awarded no more than Level 2 at best. Answers should address both the value and the limitations of the sources for the particular question and purpose given.

In responding to this question, students may choose to address each source in turn, or to adopt a more comparative approach in order to arrive at a judgement. Either approach is equally valid and what follows is indicative of the evaluation which may be relevant.

Source A: in assessing the value of this source as an explanation, students may refer to the following:

Provenance and tone

- Serge is a member of the Left Opposition and does not present a balanced view of Trotsky's talents
- Serge is a well-informed man who knows leading Bolsheviks
- it was written in 1937
- the tone is one of flattery and admiration and highly uncritical.

Content and argument

- the source outlines clearly the numerous talents of Trotsky
- it suggests that the time had been right for Trotsky to assume power

Contextual knowledge should be used to assess the validity of these points, for example:

- to question the validity of a source from the Left Opposition who were Stalin's opponents
- to note that this was written in 1937 at the height of the party purges
- to assess the validity of the characterisation of Trotsky

Source B: in assessing the value of this source as an explanation, students may refer to the following:

Provenance and tone

- the source is from Lenin
- it was written in 1922 after a series of strokes
- the tone is measured and authoritative and even-handed.

Content and argument

- the source outlines the strengths and weaknesses of two leading members of the Central Committee
- the source warns of the dangers of divisions emerging.

Contextual knowledge should be used to assess the validity of these points, for example:

- to challenge and/or corroborate the assessments made by Lenin of Stalin and Trotsky
- to challenge the concerns over faction and splits following the recent outlawing of faction
- to assess Lenin's motives in what was a secret document

In arriving at a judgement as to the relative value of each source, students may conclude that (e.g.) Source B being a private document may be the more objective and that Source A may be partial and partisan. It is likely that Source B may be seen as the more valuable, but any supported argument as to relative value should be fully rewarded.

0 2 'By 1921 the Bolsheviks had successfully overcome the problems confronting them after taking power in 1917.'

Explain why you agree or disagree with this view.

[25 marks]

Target: AO1

Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.

Generic Mark Scheme

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| L5: | Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment leading to substantiated judgement. | 21-25 |
| L4: | Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be analytical comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance. However, there may be some generalisation and judgements will be limited and only partially substantiated. | 16-20 |
| L3: | The answer will show some understanding of the full demands of the question and the answer will be adequately organised. There will be appropriate information showing an understanding of some key features and/or issues but the answer may be limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some comment in relation to the question. | 11-15 |
| L2: | The answer will be descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. | 6-10 |
| L1: | The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. | 1-5 |
| | Nothing worthy of credit. | 0 |

Indicative content

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Successfully overcome the problems:

- facing economic collapse – dealt with State direction of the economy; the Decree on Workers' Controls and Vesenkha (The Supreme Council of the National Economy) was set up to 'take charge of all existing institutions for the regulation of economic life'
- Bolsheviks controlled only Petrograd and Moscow – suppressing of political opposition was dealt with through the creation of the Cheka whose purpose was to destroy counter-revolution and sabotage. Imposed absolute Bolshevik rule
- Bolsheviks won only 24% of the total vote in the elections for the Constituent Assembly in November 1917 and were outvoted by nearly two to one by the Social Revolutionaries – after a day in session Lenin dissolved the Assembly at gunpoint by the Red Guards
- wanted an end to the war – the Brest-Litovsk Treaty of March 1918 ended the war which had left Russia materially exhausted for three years
- the Whites were defeated in the civil war and control was re-established over the non-Russian nationalities.

Had not overcome the problems:

- not all workers' committees were dominated by the Bolsheviks, without greater control at lower levels it would be difficult to impose the 'Workers' Controls'
- the need to use force and the Red Terror showed the limited grip the Bolsheviks had on the Russian population
- the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly led to criticism from Bolsheviks and communists abroad
- the Brest-Litovsk Treaty came with humiliating terms, losing a third of European Russia and war reparations set at three billion roubles
- victory in the civil war had come at a cost; the Russian economy was devastated; with factories and bridges destroyed, cattle and raw materials pillaged, mines flooded, and machines damaged. The industrial production value descended to one seventh of the value of 1913, and agriculture to one third.

- 0 3** 'The introduction and continuation of the NEP saved Bolshevik Russia from collapse.'

Explain why you agree or disagree with this view.

[25 marks]

Target: AO1

Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.

Generic Mark Scheme

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| L4: | Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be analytical comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance. However, there may be some generalisation and judgements will be limited and only partially substantiated. | 16-20 |
| L3: | The answer will show some understanding of the full demands of the question and the answer will be adequately organised. There will be appropriate information showing an understanding of some key features and/or issues but the answer may be limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some comment in relation to the question. | 11-15 |
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| L1: | The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. | 1-5 |
| | Nothing worthy of credit. | 0 |

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.

Agree:

- State terror had not forced the peasants to produce larger grain stocks. The NEP used incentives to persuade peasants to hand over grain to help bring an end to the hunger
- the Party divide over the NEP led to the Ban on Factionalism in 1921 and the condemnation of the Kronstadt Rebellion which helped to control opposition within the Party and general population
- the NEP worked; grain production, factory output and average urban wages all increased by 1924 and industry reached 1913 production levels by 1926. The NEP provided a breathing space whilst industry and agriculture recovered from War Communism
- the prosperity of the peasants and NEPmen and the initial ending of food shortages took the steam out of revolt as famine was a vital factor in opposition to the Bolsheviks
- forces both inside and outside the USSR felt that the NEP marked the end of the Communist 'experiment' which led to much needed trade agreements with Germany in 1922 and Britain in 1924.

Disagree:

- industry failed to expand as quickly as agriculture and there was high unemployment in urban areas. A Scissors Crisis in 1923 was created by the influx of grain making food prices plummet and the short supply of industrial goods sent prices soaring
- despite growing grain production there was still not enough to fund growing industrialisation (exports were only a third of the 1913 level) and by 1927 grain procurement started to fall as peasants chose to keep the grain rather than sell it so cheaply, food shortages started to reappear, as did unrest
- the profiteering of the NEPmen undermined Bolshevism. They followed ideas of 'get rich quick' and displayed their wealth conspicuously in gaming clubs and brothels. By 1923 there were 25 000 private traders in Moscow alone
- there was a war scare in the late 1920s after the rise of fascism and worsening diplomatic relations with the West. This demonstrated how industrially weak the USSR were, still being reliant on foreign imports and Stalin argued they were 100-150 years behind the West.

