



Mark Scheme (Results)

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel
In GCE History (8HI0/1E)
Advanced Subsidiary

Paper 1: Breadth study with interpretations

Option 1E: Russia, 1917–91: from Lenin to
Yeltsin

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General Marking Guidance

- All candidates must receive the same treatment. Examiners must mark the first candidate in exactly the same way as they mark the last.
- Mark schemes should be applied positively. Candidates must be rewarded for what they have shown they can do rather than penalised for omissions.
- Examiners should mark according to the mark scheme not according to their perception of where the grade boundaries may lie.
- There is no ceiling on achievement. All marks on the mark scheme should be used appropriately.
- All the marks on the mark scheme are designed to be awarded. Examiners should always award full marks if deserved, i.e. if the answer matches the mark scheme. Examiners should also be prepared to award zero marks if the candidate's response is not worthy of credit according to the mark scheme.
- Where some judgement is required, mark schemes will provide the principles by which marks will be awarded and exemplification may be limited.
- When examiners are in doubt regarding the application of the mark scheme to a candidate's response, the team leader must be consulted.
- Crossed out work should be marked UNLESS the candidate has replaced it with an alternative response.

Generic Level Descriptors: sections A and B

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.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material
1	1–4	• Simple or generalised statements are made about the topic. • Some accurate and relevant knowledge is included, but it lacks range and depth and does not directly address the question. • The overall judgement is missing or asserted. • There is little, if any, evidence of attempts to structure the answer, and the answer overall lacks coherence and precision.
2	5–10	• There is limited analysis of some key features of the period relevant to the question, but descriptive passages are included that are not clearly shown to relate to the question. • Mostly accurate and relevant knowledge is included, but it lacks range or depth and has only implicit links to the demands and conceptual focus of the question. • An overall judgement is given but with limited substantiation, and the criteria for judgement are left implicit. • The answer shows some attempts at organisation, but most of the answer is lacking in coherence, clarity and precision.
3	11–16	• There is some analysis of, and attempt to explain links between, the relevant key features of the period and the question, although descriptive passages may be included. • Mostly accurate and relevant knowledge is included to demonstrate some understanding of the demands and conceptual focus of the question, but material lacks range or depth. • Attempts are made to establish criteria for judgement and to relate the overall judgement to them, although with weak substantiation. • The answer shows some organisation. The general trend of the argument is clear, but parts of it lack logic, coherence and precision.
4	17–20	• Key issues relevant to the question are explored by an analysis of the relationships between key features of the period, although treatment of issues may be uneven. • Sufficient knowledge is deployed to demonstrate understanding of the demands and conceptual focus of the question and to meet most of its demands. • Valid criteria by which the question can be judged are established and applied in the process of coming to a judgement. Although some of the evaluations may be only partly substantiated, the overall judgement is supported. • The answer is generally well organised. The argument is logical and is communicated with clarity, although in a few places it may lack coherence and precision.

Section C

Target: A03: Analyse and evaluate, in relation to the historical context, different ways in which aspects of the past have been interpreted.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
1	1–4	• Demonstrates only limited comprehension of the extracts, selecting some material relevant to the debate. • Some relevant contextual knowledge is included, with limited linkage to the extracts. • Judgement on the view is assertive, with little or no supporting evidence
2	5–10	• Demonstrates some understanding and attempts analysis of the extracts by describing some points within them that are relevant to the debate. • Contextual knowledge is added to information from the extracts, but only to expand on matters of detail or to note some aspects which are not included. • A judgement on the view is given, but with limited support and related to the extracts overall, rather than specific issues
3	11–16	• Demonstrates understanding of the extracts and shows some analysis by selecting and explaining some key points of interpretation they contain and indicating differences • Knowledge of some issues related to the debate is included to link to, or expand, some views given in the extracts. • A judgement is given and related to some key points of view in the extracts and discussion is attempted, albeit with limited substantiation.
4	17–20	• Demonstrates understanding of the extracts, analysing the issues of interpretation raised by comparison of them. • Integrates issues raised by extracts with those from own knowledge to discuss the views. Most of the relevant aspects of the debate will be discussed, although treatment of some aspects may lack depth. • Discusses evidence in order to reach a supported overall judgement. Discussion of points of view in the extracts demonstrates understanding that the issues are matters of interpretation.

Section A: indicative content

Question	Indicative content
1	Answers will be credited according to candidates' deployment of material in relation to the qualities outlined in the generic mark scheme. The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all the material which is indicated as relevant. Candidates are expected to reach a judgement on whether Lenin's leadership was the main reason for the survival of the Soviet regime in the years 1917-28. Arguments and evidence that Lenin's leadership was the main reason for the survival of the Soviet regime in the years 1917-28 should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include: • Lenin decided to close down the Constituent Assembly in 1918 after the Bolsheviks had failed to secure a majority of seats, thereby preserving the Soviet regime and removing a potentially important opposition forum • Lenin supported Trotsky in creating a traditional Red Army against the opposition of other leading Bolsheviks; without Lenin's backing Trotsky would not have prevailed and the Bolsheviks may have lost the civil war • Lenin pushed through the signing of the Treaty of Brest- Litovsk against the opposition of the left communist Bolshevik faction because he realized that the regime needed peace with the Central Powers in order to survive • Lenin persuaded a reluctant party to accept the economic compromises of the NEP in March 1921; without this shift in economic policy, the Soviet regime may have been overthrown. Arguments and evidence that other factors were the main reason for the survival of the Soviet regime in the years 1917-28 should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include: • Trotsky played an important role in the regime's survival, e.g. during the civil war, his military intervention prevented Petrograd falling to the Whites when Lenin had resigned himself to losing the city • Bolshevik control/censorship of the press and radio provided cheap and accessible pro-socialist propaganda in order to win hearts and minds, e.g. Pravda, Izvestiya, Glavlit and, from 1924, Lenin's cult of personality • The Bolsheviks used the arts and culture to secure popular endorsement for the new socialist society, e.g. Proletkult and the cinema; by the mid-late 1920s, the NEP had brought greater economic and political stability • The weakness of the anti-Bolshevik opposition helped the Soviet regime to survive during this period, e.g. the White forces were divided during the civil war and the Kronstadt and Tambov revolts were isolated. Other relevant material must be credited.

Question	Indicative content
2	Answers will be credited according to candidates' deployment of material in relation to the qualities outlined in the generic mark scheme. The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all the material which is indicated as relevant. Candidates are expected to reach a judgement about whether Stalin's use of the media and propaganda, in the years 1928-53, was the main reason for his control over the Soviet population. Arguments and evidence that Stalin's use of the media and propaganda, in the years 1928-53, was the main reason for his control over the Soviet population should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include: • Stalin imposed rigid censorship to control the Soviet population, e.g. from the mid-1930s the works of opponents such as Trotsky were banned and Soviet history was rewritten to accentuate Stalin's role in the revolution • From 1928, Glavlit controlled access to Soviet economic data so the public had to rely on highly optimistic and inaccurate official statistics regarding industrial and agricultural production and living standards in the USSR • The media were not allowed to publish any type of bad news, such as industrial accidents and natural disasters, in order to create a positive image of Stalin's regime and leadership for the population • Stalin's cult of personality was an important instrument of social control because it portrayed him as Lenin's natural successor, a visionary socialist, a military genius despite making serious errors. Arguments and evidence that, in the years 1928-53, other factors/developments were the main reason for Stalin's control over the Soviet population should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include: • By the mid-1930s, the excesses of the personality cult and other propaganda were becoming counterproductive since some Soviet workers, intellectuals and party members were becoming cynical • Stalin's drive for economic modernization provided an important control mechanism because the Five-Year Plans and collectivisation created a support base among the party rank and file and patriotic Soviet workers • Stalin used terror, coercion and intimidation to control the Soviet population throughout this period, e.g. harsh factory discipline, forcible collectivization, the purges of the 1930s and similar tactics after 1945 • The existential threat to the USSR posed by the Nazi invasion of 1941 generated patriotic fervour for the defence of the country and popular support for the Stalinist regime, reinforced by ultimate victory in 1945. Other relevant material must be credited.

Section B: indicative content

Question	Indicative content
3	Answers will be credited according to candidates' deployment of material in relation to the qualities outlined in the generic mark scheme. The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all the material which is indicated as relevant. Candidates are expected to reach a judgement about how accurate it is to say that, in the years 1953-85, the Soviet government's economic priorities did not change. Arguments and evidence that, in the years 1953-85, the Soviet government's economic priorities did not change should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include: • The Soviet military-industrial complex, with its enduring attachment to heavy industry, remained a dominant influence in economic policy-making throughout this period. • During this period, the USSR continued with the methods and priorities of the command economy established under Stalin, e.g. the Brezhnev regime gave greater economic powers to Gosplan • Conservative elements within the Soviet government stifled attempts to change economic priorities, e.g. the 1965 Kosygin reforms to improve production and encourage managerial initiative were side-lined by 1968 • The Soviet government-worker 'social contract' militated against changing economic priorities, e.g. the expectation of long-term full employment, which led to an unwillingness to tackle inefficiency and low productivity. Arguments and evidence that, in the years 1953-85, the Soviet government's economic priorities did change should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include: • Khrushchev attempted to focus on light industry, chemicals and consumer goods (rather than heavy industry) to broaden the Soviet economy e.g. the Seven Year Plan (1959-65) • Khrushchev's greater investment in agriculture, and his Virgin Lands scheme, helped to raise the status of agriculture, increased food production and raised farmers' income • Khrushchev cut military spending to 9 per cent of GDP (1955-58) to improve living standards, then increased it to 11 per cent (1964); Brezhnev raised it to 13 per cent (1970) to match US nuclear capability • Brezhnev boosted consumer industries via the Ninth Five Year Plan (1971-75) so, by 1980, 85 per cent of families had televisions; he also allocated a greater share of overall investment to agriculture (26 per cent in 1976). Other relevant material must be credited.

Question	Indicative content
4	Answers will be credited according to candidates' deployment of material in relation to the qualities outlined in the generic mark scheme. The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all the material which is indicated as relevant. Candidates are expected to reach a judgement on how accurate it is to say that, in the years 1917-85, the most significant Soviet social development was the provision of education. Arguments and evidence that, in the years 1917-85, the provision of education was the most significant Soviet social development should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include: • The Soviet regime established a system of universal compulsory education by the 1930s, raising the number of children who had access to education from 14 million in 1929 to over 20 million in 1931 • Soviet provision of education led to the almost complete eradication of illiteracy during this period with literacy levels raised to 98-99 per cent by 1959 • The development of part-time adult education (rabfaki) as a 'second chance' provision from the 1950s offered self-improvement and enhanced job prospects; by 1964 over two million took such courses • From the 1930s, the expansion of Soviet higher education improved the prospects for promotion and upward social mobility for working class and female students; by 1980, 5.1 million students were in higher education. Arguments and evidence that, in the years 1917-85, the provision of education was not the most significant Soviet social development/other social provision was more significant should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include: • Lack of resources hindered the government's plans for a universal programme of compulsory education until the 1950s, e.g. limited state spending on education and underfunded school transport • Up to the 1980s, traditional rural, ethnic and cultural attitudes towards education disadvantaged rural children and Muslim females, and compulsory ideological content reduced Soviet education to propaganda • Full or almost full employment in the USSR since the 1930s provided job security, the introduction of a minimum wage in 1956 and real wage increases in the 1960s and 1970s • The expanding provision of housing, social benefits and healthcare from the 1950s was significant for the Soviet population, e.g. state-provided living space doubled in the years 1951-61. Other relevant material must be credited.

Section C: indicative content

Question	Indicative content
5	Answers will be credited according to candidates' deployment of material in relation to the qualities outlined in the generic mark scheme. The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all the material which is indicated as relevant. Other relevant material not suggested below must also be credited. Candidates are expected to use the extracts and their own knowledge to consider the view that, in the years 1985-91, the collapse of the Soviet Union came about because of the nationalist resurgence in the communist states of Eastern Europe. Reference to the works of named historians is not expected, but candidates may consider historians' viewpoints in framing their argument. Candidates should use their discussion of various views to reach a reasoned conclusion. In considering the given view, the points made by the authors should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include: Extract 1 • Gorbachev's resetting of the relationship between the USSR and the Eastern bloc encouraged the growth of nationalism within the Soviet Union • Gorbachev's non-intervention policy facilitated the collapse of communism in Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and East Germany • Nationalists within the Soviet republics, such as Georgia, Russia and the Baltic states, were galvanised by the successful attempts of the East European states to break away from the USSR. Extract 2 • Increasing trade with the west and the availability of black-market goods offered the Soviet people a tempting economic alternative to the declining Soviet command model • Gorbachev's pursuit of radical economic and political reforms, which were designed to solve the USSR's problems, undermined the Soviet Union and led to its collapse • Prior to the fall of the Soviet Union, the Eastern Bloc collapsed because the USSR no longer possessed either the determination or the resources to maintain its control over Eastern Europe. Candidates should use their own knowledge of the issues to address the view that, in the years 1985-91, the collapse of the Soviet Union came about because of the nationalist resurgence in the communist states of Eastern Europe. Relevant points may include: • Gorbachev's foreign policy towards the Eastern bloc encouraged 'people power' and national self-determination rather than his desired objective of a 'socialist commonwealth' linking the USSR and the satellite states • Gorbachev's 'Sinatra Doctrine' gave the Eastern bloc the freedom to reject communism, e.g. the removal of Ceausescu in Romania (1989) and the election of the anti-communist Democratic Forum in Hungary (1990) • The success of the East European revolt undermined the authority and legitimacy of the USSR and emboldened the Soviet republics, e.g. the Baltic popular fronts demanding independence from the late 1980s.

	Candidates should relate their own knowledge to the material in the extracts to counter or modify the view that, in the years 1985-91, the collapse of the Soviet Union came about because of the nationalist resurgence in the communist states of Eastern Europe. Relevant points may include: • By 1990-91 some 2905 joint ventures with foreign firms had been established in the USSR raising public awareness of economic alternatives, e.g. McDonalds, symbol of US capitalism, opened a branch in Moscow • Gorbachev's reforms weakened the USSR, e.g. glasnost led to mounting public criticism of communist rule and perestroika and market mechanisms failed to deliver adequate food supplies and consumer goods • Gorbachev struggled to deal with the impact of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster (1986), which exposed the bankruptcy of the Soviet system, increased public discontent and galvanised independence movements • The cost of maintaining the Eastern bloc imposed a heavy burden on the Soviet economy, e.g. in the years 1981-86 the Warsaw Pact countries received an annual overall subsidy of \$3 billion from the USSR. Other relevant material must be credited.
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