



Activity 2: Differentiation of AS and A level

- Study question 5 of Option 1E in both the AS and A level SAMs, along with the indicative content in the mark schemes.
- Identify the ways in which the A level question approach differs from the AS and represents a higher level of demand.

1E AS QUESTION 5

Study Extracts 1 and 2 in the Extracts Booklet before you answer this question.

Historians have different views about the reasons for the fall of the Soviet Union.

Analyse and evaluate the extracts and use your knowledge of the issues to explain your answer to the following question.

How far do you agree with the view that the collapse of the Soviet Union came about because of the failure of Gorbachev's reform programme?

1E A LEVEL QUESTION 5

Study Extracts 1 and 2 in the Extracts Booklet before you answer this question.

In the light of differing interpretations, how convincing do you find the view that the USSR fell because of Gorbachev's misjudgement of the seriousness of the 'national question' (Extract 1, line 5)?

To explain your answer, analyse and evaluate the material in both extracts, using your own knowledge of the issues.

Extracts for use with Section C.

Extract 1: From Martin McCauley, *The Soviet Union, 1917–91*, published 1993.

When Gorbachev took his leave of the Soviet people on 25 December 1991, he did so a saddened man. The Soviet Union, which he had tried so bravely to reform, was about to pass into history.

Gorbachev had a clear agenda before he took office. In a speech in December 1984, he spoke of the need to make 'deep transformations in the economy and the whole system of social relations'. His intention was to set in motion a revolution, controlled from above. His reforms quickly reached their limits. Gorbachev's intention was not to achieve fundamental changes but to make the existing structures function more efficiently. The state created by Lenin and the centrally planned economy were to remain. He rejected Stalin's legacy and searched for a more humane socialism. However, he never had a clear vision of how political, economic and social reform would interact and allow the USSR to progress. Unfortunately for Gorbachev, public, social and political forces, awakened by *perestroika*, could not be regulated from above.

Extract 2: From Robert Service, *The Penguin History of Modern Russia*, published 1997.

Nowhere was Gorbachev's complacency more harmful [to the Soviet Union] than in relation to the 'national question'. Gorbachev was not a pure Russian: he was born to a couple consisting of a Russian and a Ukrainian. He was comfortable with his dual identity, and this produced casualness that gave much offence. For example, when he visited Ukraine in 1986, he spoke about Russia and the USSR as if they were one and the same. Ukrainian national sensitivities were outraged.

The nationalist resurgence in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia had become more defiant by 1988. Not all the dissenters were calling for outright independence, but the degree of self-government demanded by them was rising. Their example stimulated national movements elsewhere.

Acknowledgements

Extract 1 is from Martin McCauley, *The Soviet Union 1917–1991*, Longman 1993 © 2014 Taylor & Francis Group; Extract 2 is from Robert Service, *The Penguin History of Modern Russia: From Tsarism to the Twenty-first Century*, Penguin 2009 © Penguin Books Ltd

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Section C: indicative content

Question	Indicative content
5	<p>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.</p> <p>Candidates are expected to use the extracts and their own knowledge to consider the view that fall of the Soviet Union came about primarily because of the failure of Gorbachev's reform programme. 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.</p> <p>In considering the given view, the points made by the authors should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include:</p> <p>Extract 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gorbachev's reforms quickly reached their limits • Gorbachev's intention was not to allow fundamental reforms which threatened the Leninist state and the centrally planned economy • He was unable to regulate the forces unleashed by <i>perestroika</i>. <p>Extract 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gorbachev's complacency towards the 'national question' was harmful to the Soviet Union • The nationalist resurgence in the Baltic Republics was accompanied by demands for increased autonomy • The example of the Baltic Republics stimulated national movements elsewhere within the Soviet Union. <p>Candidates should use their own knowledge of the issues to address the effects of Gorbachev's reforms. Relevant points may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Perestroika</i> dramatically weakened the Soviet economy, leading to severe shortages of food and consumer goods • <i>Glasnost</i> encouraged a new political culture that brought Soviet politics into disrepute. <p>Candidates should use their own knowledge of the issues to address other conditional and/or contingent reasons which explain the fall of the Soviet Union. Relevant points may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The political and economic condition of the USSR in 1985 and the extent to which its problems were systemic • The growth of nationalism in Eastern Europe, strengthening nationalist forces in the USSR • The weakening of Communist Party authority in the USSR as a consequence of the extensive challenge to communist power in satellite states in Eastern Europe.

Extracts for use with Section C.

Extract 1: From John Keep, *A History of the Soviet Union 1945–1991*, published 1995.

Gorbachev, who had made his career in a region where ethnic tensions were not particularly marked, underestimated their explosive potential. A rationalist, he assumed too readily that national enmities could be reduced by social and economic progress. As late as November 1987, when it was already clear that the national question was a volcano that might erupt at any time, he was uttering soothing statements to the effect that the problem had essentially been solved but needed review by experts. He suffered from 'ethnic blindness' as shown by his policy of appointing Russians to replace uncooperative native leaders. When protests [over one such replacement] broke out in Kazakhstan, nine demonstrators were killed and five hundred arrested. Protests were staged in sympathy in several other places. Despite this ominous warning, the number of non-Russians in leading Party bodies tended to decline in the early years of *perestroika*. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Gorbachev, preoccupied by what he saw as far more substantial issues, displayed a remarkable degree of complacency.

Extract 2: From Robert Service, *The Penguin History of Modern Russia*, published 1998.

By 1988, Gorbachev had carried out what had once been a virtually inconceivable transformation of politics and culture. The entire structure of the state had been shaken, and Gorbachev let it be known that more walls had to be brought down before he could properly rebuild as he wished.

While battering the system in 1986–88, Gorbachev hoped to change the Soviet order and secure popular approval and political legitimacy throughout society. He still aimed, in his confused fashion of thought, to preserve the Soviet Union and the one-party state. Lenin and the October Revolution were meant to remain publicly revered. But he failed to understand that his actions were strengthening the very phenomena which he was trying to eliminate. Glasnost and perestroika were undermining the political and economic foundations of the Soviet order. Localism, nationalism, corruption, illegal private profiteering and distrust of official authority: all these phenomena had been reinforced by the dismantling of central controls undertaken by Gorbachev.

Acknowledgements

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Question	Indicative content
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="363 136 1362 230">• The attempts at economic reform had led to the growth of bribery, corruption and profiteering in many areas of the economy [relevant to Extract 2] <li data-bbox="363 248 1294 342">• Additional reasons, e.g. the role and popular appeal of Yeltsin in demanding widespread reforms, and in undermining Gorbachev's government.