



# Examiners' Report June 2024

GCSE History 1HI0 P4

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## Introduction

The Period Study focuses on a time span of at least 50 years and requires candidates to understand the unfolding narrative of substantial developments and issues associated with the period. In this examination candidates answer three questions which all target AO1 (Knowledge and Understanding) and AO2 (Analysis of Second Order Concepts). Both AOs are assessed equally on all questions. Progression in AO1 is shown by a candidate's increasing ability to select information precisely and to show wide-ranging knowledge and understanding. Progression in AO2 is shown by a candidate's response moving from basic or generalised comments to analytical explanations which show a line of reasoning that is coherent, logical, and sustained.

Centres are reminded that the indicative content in the mark scheme does not imply what must be included in a response nor does it give any expectation as to how candidates are expected to structure their responses. It was noted this summer that there are still some candidates that respond to Question 02 by writing a first-person narrative account, sometimes written in the form of a letter or diary entry. Such responses should be avoided; it is extremely unlikely that any AO2 can be awarded for any such responses and only a limited application of AO1. In addition, centres are reminded that where candidates use extra paper, it needs to be on a separate sheet from any extra paper used for Paper B. Also, if candidates have special consideration for writing examinations, the responses for Paper P and Paper B should be separate from each other.

### GCSE History specification and assessment changes

This note is a reminder that minor changes are being made to the Pearson Edexcel GCSE History specification content and assessment model. Assessment and language changes apply from the June 2025 exam series onwards, and content changes from the June 2026 exam series onwards.

We strongly recommend, if you have not already, that you familiarise yourself with these changes in time for the start of the new academic year in September 2024. Some options are affected more than others, but all options are affected by the assessment changes.

Below is a link to the summary guidance document, which will help you to find all the specific information and guidance available to help you take on board these changes:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/History/2016/Teaching-and-learning-materials/gcse-history-changes-for-2025-and-2026-summary-guidance.pdf>

If you have any queries, please contact Mark Battye, our History subject advisor, at [TeachingHistory@pearson.com](mailto:TeachingHistory@pearson.com).

## Question 1

Question 01 focuses on consequence, requiring candidates to explain two valid consequences. Candidates are expected to explain 'what happened as a result of the given event, development etc.' (2 x 4 marks)

Many candidates were able to offer two valid consequences of the Prague Spring (Czechoslovakia, 1968) and a significant number of responses were very impressive in terms of both analysis and specific information. At Level 2 the most common consequences explained were the initial reforms introduced by Dubček, the USSR's fears of challenge to communist rule leading to direct military intervention, and criticisms from Western countries. These analyses were then frequently supported with specific information such as Dubcek's promotion of 'socialism with a human face' and examples of his reforms, details of the Soviet invasion and the later implementation of the Brezhnev Doctrine and the cancellation of President Johnson's upcoming meeting with Brezhnev, together with the USA not wanting to risk a rise in tension with the USSR. Level 1 responses were far more general comments about a consequence and with limited knowledge such as 'people wanted change', 'the USSR attacked', or 'people were killed.' There were some candidates who confused events in Czechoslovakia with the Hungarian Uprising and wrote unrewardable details for AO1 such as the reaction to Rákosi's rule, Czechoslovakia wanting to leave the Warsaw Pact or the execution of Dubček. There were also a number of candidates who wrote unrewardable consequences of the Prague Spring such as it directly leading to the rise of movements such as Solidarity in Poland, demonstrations to bring down the Berlin Wall or economic reforms within the USSR.

1 Explain **two** consequences of the Prague Spring (Czechoslovakia, 1968).

Consequence 1:

Dubcek's leadership meant that Czechoslovakia tried to rebel against the USSR's ideology, resulting in a Russian military march in Prague, causing the USSR to advocate its power and controlling abilities to the world, highlighting the strengths of communism.

Consequence 2:

Another consequence is that ~~it~~ it highlighted USA as weak, due to the fact they didn't aid Czechoslovakia when faced with communist difficulties, despite the promises of Truman in the Truman doctrine stating that USA will aid any communist countries who want to fight against communism.



The first consequence is low Level 2 with stronger performance at AO2 with 'tried to rebel' and 'advocate its power and controlling abilities.' The response is weaker for AO1 and so therefore the response is low Level 2. The second response is high Level 1. The response from 'despite the promises of Truman' onwards is unrewardable as it shows a misunderstanding of the Truman Doctrine promising to aid communities countries rather than the principle of containing the spread of communism.



Candidates should try and ensure that both consequences give both an analytical explanation of a consequence which is supported with some specific information to gain full marks for the consequence offered.

1 Explain **two** consequences of the Prague Spring (Czechoslovakia, 1968).

Consequence 1:

One consequence of Prague Spring was that because of that & the Soviet Union was now able to invade other countries apart of East Eastern Europe / block if there was a threat to Communism. This ~~was~~ because ~~to~~ such as, uprising and protests anything out of line ~~mean~~ of ~~Communism~~ Soviet Communism meant the doctrine could meant that if Soviet union could invade if he felt there ~~was~~ a threat to ~~the~~ ideology Communism. Other countries apart of ~~Communist~~ Soviet Union left ~~to~~ Soviets communism and joined China's communism this caused a split.

Consequence 2:

Another consequence of Dubcek's Reforms meant that the Soviet Union invaded Czechoslovakia ~~this~~ <sup>this</sup> was because Dubcek refused to back down from his reforms which were improving living standards/lives for the Czechoslovakia people and which ~~meant~~ Soviet Union felt it ~~was~~ <sup>would</sup> threaten Communism and thought it a ~~loosen~~ Soviet Union grip on

Communism throughout Eastern Europe. Soviet Union then sent tanks into Czechoslovakia and ~~the~~ some were killed. Dubček was arrested and ~~later~~ killed he was replaced to keep Communism as the Soviet Union would like.

(Total for Question 1 = 8 marks)



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

A clear consequence is explained with AO2 awarded for 'now able to invade other countries of Eastern Europe' which is supported with specific information such as 'the Doctrine.' Therefore with both AOs in Level 2 the response is high Level 2.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Please only use consequence 1.

## Question 2

Question 02 focuses on analytical narrative and the concepts causation, consequence, and change. The question includes two stimulus points and focuses on a specific period containing events, developments or ideas that can be analysed as a sequence of events. (8 marks).

Many candidates were able to access Level 3 with a narrative showing a clear sequence of events leading to an outcome (AO2) with accurate and relevant information included which addressed three or more aspects of content (AO1). Most responses included use of the two stimulus points as part of their overall narrative. At Level 3 the majority of candidates analysed how Gorbachev's 'new thinking' led to reforms within the USSR and consequent increase in opportunities for countries to make their own decisions. Responses then showed the role of protest within the Eastern Bloc, the significance of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the impact of the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. These narratives often included AO1 knowledge and understanding from aspects of content such as the Sinatra Doctrine, the rise of Solidarity in Poland, the opening of the border between Austria and Hungary, and the protests in Romania. Some responses also included the impact of Gorbachev's 'new thinking' changing superpower relations and pushing the USSR into reducing its control over eastern Europe. Many of the responses that remained in Level 2 relied solely on the two aspects of content given by the two stimulus points in the question and therefore without a third aspect of content could not access Level 3. There were also some Level 2 responses that included unrewardable content outside of the time frame of the set question (such as the USSR's invasion of Afghanistan and the Olympic boycotts) or wrote at length about superpower relations during the 'Second Cold War' (descriptions of the Strategic Defence Initiative were relatively common) but without linking the material to the collapse of Soviet control of Eastern Europe. Level 1 responses tended to show some limited knowledge added to one of the stimulus points.

~~When~~ When Gorbachev came into power he brought alongside him 2 main policies: glasnost and perestroika. Glasnost ~~meaning~~ <sup>being</sup> openness and showing that the ~~country~~ government was not corrupt and perestroika meaning the restructure of the Soviet ~~the~~ union. These two policies meant that the satellite countries were no longer under major control from Moscow and eventually led to them having too much freedom.

With their newfound freedom many countries left the Warsaw Pact and eventually the pact was dissolved. ~~many~~ ~~many~~  
This was seen as the

end of the cold war. ~~the~~  
Gorbachev had ~~lost~~ his control  
on the soviet satellite states. ~~the~~



This response is mid Level 2. There is some organisation of material into a sequence of events leading to an outcome with some analysis of the linkage between them with 'satellite states were no longer under major control' and 'with their new found freedom.' There is also additional accurate and relevant information such as the explanations of Glasnost, Perestroika and control from Moscow. Both AOs rely fully on the two stimulus points provided (Gorbachev's 'new thinking' and the end of the Warsaw Pact) and therefore only addresses two aspects of content.



Candidates should make sure at least three or more aspects of content are included for access to Level 3.

The collapse of Soviet control in Eastern Europe began with Gorbachev's new Sinatra Doctrine. This entailed two new policies, 'Glasnost' which meant 'openness' and 'Perestroika' which meant 'Restructuring'. The Perestroika policy signified Gorbachev's desire to alter the structure of the USSR from a communist dictatorship to a still communist but less militaristic and strict ~~country~~ environment. This led to Soviet Satellite states being more encouraged to adopt some elements of Western civilisation, such as Western music and Pizza Hut. The Glasnost policy meant people were now free to speak out against the government. An effect of this was that Soviet countries, such as Yugoslavia and Hungary, could express their disapproval of the Warsaw Pact and their desire to leave it.

Gorbachev's 'New Thinking' that was applied as a part of the Sinatra Doctrine also led to the

removal of the Brezhnev Doctrine, meaning Soviet satellite states were permitted to leave the Warsaw Pact for the first time.

As a result of this, the end of the Warsaw Pact was secured in the year 1991, as Eastern European satellite states campaigned to leave the pact, which signified the loss of Soviet control of Eastern Europe.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This response is high Level 3. There is an analysis of the linkage between events such as 'desire to alter the structure of the USSR', 'this led to satellite states being more encouraged', 'people were now free to speak out.' AO1 is shown with references to the Sinatra Doctrine and aspects of western culture such as music. Although the response mistakenly refers to Yugoslavia as part of the Warsaw Pact this should not be used to penalise the candidate.

### Question 3

Question 03 focuses on significance by asking candidates to explain the importance of an event/person/development in relation to situations and/or unfolding developments. Here candidates are expected to explain 'what difference did the event/person/development make' to the identified situation and/or unfolding development. Candidates answer two questions from a choice of three. (2 x 8 marks).

The first option focused on the importance of the Yalta Conference (February 1945) for relations between East and West. There were some very impressive responses with clear analysis of importance supported with wide-ranging accurate and relevant information. Level 3 responses analysed how the Conference was important for agreement reached between the Allies to work on specific issues and that there was a desire to maintain peace after the Second World War. At this level responses frequently also included areas where relations were strained. In terms of accurate and relevant information many candidates referred to aspects such as the division of Germany, the USSR joining the war against Japan, the commitment to setting up a United Nations organisation, Stalin's promise to hold free elections and discussions regarding Poland's borders. Level 2 responses tended to have a good understanding of the importance of Yalta for either helping or hindering relations between East and West and included knowledge and understanding on the division of Germany. However, many responses then included unrewardable material for AO1 by referring to aspects such as Truman and the USA's development of the atomic bomb or even the implementation of the Marshall Plan. At Level 1 responses were basic and contained generalised comments such as 'they decided to take parts of Germany' or 'they agreed to fight together to end the war.'

The second option focused on the importance of Khrushchev's Berlin ultimatum (1958) for tension between East and West. At Level 3 were some very impressive responses analytically explained how the ultimatum increased tension between East and West, and this was supported with knowledge and understanding which included aspects such as the Khrushchev's actual demands, the nature of the refugee problem in Berlin, the holding of summit meetings and the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961. Responses in Level 2 often showed an attempt at analysis with explanations of how the ultimatum increased tensions but had less AO1 fully relevant to the question by either writing at length about the nature of the Berlin Wall and the consequences of its construction. Very low Level 2 responses and many remaining in Level 1 often gave a general analysis of rising tension for AO2 but then confused their understanding of the period by writing for AO1 either about how Khrushchev launched a blockade of Berlin and the West's response with an airlift or wrote almost entirely on the effects of the Berlin Wall on the lives of German people.

The third option focused on the importance of SALT 1 for relations between the USA and the Soviet Union in the 1970s. There were some very detailed and through supported analyses at Level 3. Overall, these responses explained how SALT 1 generally improved relations and increased co-operation between the superpowers. These analytical explanations were then supported with knowledge and understanding such as figures on the limits implemented on weapons, the Basic Principles Agreement, measures taken on the conduct of nuclear warfare, Nixon and Brezhnev's respective visits to Moscow and Washington and improved US-Soviet relations leading to the Helsinki Agreements plans for SALT 2. Many of these responses also commented on the limitations of SALT 1 with both sides still retaining significant amounts of weapons and that the overall spirit of détente was relatively short-lived. Level 2 responses tended to show some analytical explanation but without secure knowledge and understanding of key aspects of the set question or offered mainly descriptive accounts of the arms race itself rather than an actual focus on the question of US-Soviet relations. At Level 1 most responses comprised a basic comment on less weapons or that the USA and the USSR wanted peace.

- ☒ The importance of the Yalta Conference (February 1945) for relations between East and West.
- ☒ The importance of Khrushchev's Berlin ultimatum (1958) for tension between East and West.
- ☒ The importance of SALT 1 for relations between the USA and the Soviet Union in the 1970s.

The importance of the Yalta conference for relations between the east and west was that they were good as at Yalta in February 1945 there were a lot of agreements. At Yalta the big three, Britain, USA and USSR discussed what would happen to Germany once Nazi Germany was defeated. Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin agreed that once Nazi Germany was defeated it ~~so~~ would be split into four different zones each being controlled by Britain, USA, USSR and France. And in turn the city of Berlin would also be split into four zones controlled by each of the four countries. This was good for the relations of East and West as they were agreeing to help each other. Another thing discussed in ~~the~~ the Yalta Conference was that Stalin agreed to help the

president of the USA Roosevelt ~~to that~~ to join the USA side and fight against the Japanese, if the US agreed to help fight Nazi Germany with him, which would be to his favour as it was only the red soviet army ~~is~~ alone fighting in Germany at that current moment. This agreement strengthened East and West relations as this agreement helped both of them out. Another ~~the~~ agreement that happened at Yalta was for Europe to all have ~~However Stalin still w~~ free elections again and

- ☒ The importance of SALT 1 for relations between the USA and the Soviet Union in the 1970s.

SALT 1 was very important for relations between the USA and the Soviet Union in the 1970's as this was a period of peace in the cold war called détente. In SALT 1 they agreed to stop the arms race and set out boundaries that should ~~not~~ not be crossed to avoid the risk of ~~mutual~~ mutual destruction if there were to be nuclear and atomic weapons used. This was good for the relations as they agreed to stop and be peaceful with each other as both super powers realised that ~~the~~ a nuclear war would be mutual destruction which neither of them wanted so they both signed for SALT 1.



The first response is Level 3. An analysis of importance is shown for AO2 with comments such as 'relations... were good', 'they were agreeing to help each other', 'this agreement strengthened East and West relations.' For AO1 there is clear accurate and relevant information showing good knowledge and understanding with the correct names of the three leaders present at Yalta, discussions over Germany and the fight against Japan. The second response is mid Level 2 with an attempt to analyse importance with 'period of peace' and 'they agreed to stop' and some knowledge and understanding is shown with the reference to détente and mutual destruction.



Candidates should ensure that the explanation showing analysis of importance is supported with good knowledge and understanding to access Level 3.

## Paper Summary

Based on the performance seen on this paper, students are offered the following advice:

- Make sure that you attempt all three questions, including both parts of Q1 and Q3.
- For all questions use accurate and relevant information to show your knowledge and understanding of events.
- Question 01: explain a link between the event and the consequence and do not simply describe or state something that happened. Focus on what happened as a result of the event.
- Question 02: focus on the date range specified in the question and ensure the events or developments in your narrative are linked together to show a clear sequence of events.
- Question 03: explain the impact the development/event/person had on the second development/event/person named in the question. Focus on what difference the development/event/person made.
- In this examination series there was a noticeable increase in the number of responses with illegible handwriting. Candidates should be aware that examiners can only credit what they can read.

## **Grade boundaries**

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html>

