

Examiners' Report

June 2025

GCSE History 1HI0 P4

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Introduction

On the Period Studies papers all questions show progression in the mark scheme for AO2 with the candidates' increasing ability to make generalized comments to more analytical explanations and reasoning focused on the relevant second-order concept. The second strand of the mark scheme shows how AO1 is assessed with the candidate's ability to progress from responses with limited knowledge and understanding of the topic to deploying accurate and relevant information to show good knowledge and understanding of the period.

This examination series saw the change to Question 01 with candidates instead of being required to give two consequences of one aspect of content are now required to give one consequence of two aspects of content. This change was made to improve the accessibility of the examination and evidence from responses clearly shows that this has been the case. Candidates are not expected to write any more in their responses than in previous examinations and the writing space available is unchanged with the now Question 01(a) and (b) compared to the previous Question 01.

Centres are reminded that the indicative content in the mark scheme does not state what must be in responses but is meant to exemplify the range of material which examiners might expect to see in candidates' work. As mentioned in previous Principal Examiner reports, there are a number of candidates that write first person diary or letter type responses for Question 02. Such responses should be avoided as although AO1 can sometimes be rewarded, it is very unlikely that there will be any aspects of the work which can access AO2.

Centres are also reminded that where candidates need extra space for a response, this should be on separate extra paper rather than within the space provided for a different question. Where candidates have special consideration to word process their responses, centres should ensure that their B (British Depth Study) and P (Period Study) responses are separated from each other.

Question 1

Both Questions 01(a) and 01(b) focus on consequences and require candidates to explain a valid consequence (AO2) and support the explanation with information about the topic (AO1). The candidate is being asked 'what happened as a result' of a given event, individual or development. In this examination Question 01 focused on the consequences of the Bay of Pigs incident and the Olympic boycotts in the early 1980s.

For Question 01(a) many candidates reached Level 2 with explanations on how the Bay of Pigs led to humiliation for the USA, the development of closer links between Cuba and the USSR or contributing to increasing tension between the superpowers. At Level 2 these features were most frequently supported with specific information showing good knowledge and understanding (AO1) on how this led to a sense of embarrassment for Kennedy, encouraged Khrushchev to supply weapons to Castro or the response of the USA to the USSR's transportation of missiles to Cuba. Level 1 responses tended to be general comments on rising tension between the superpowers and/or Cuba and the USA or basic statements on the failure of the USA's attempt to overthrow Castro. There were some unrewardable responses which commented solely on the reasons (causation) behind the incident by writing about the Cuban Revolution. Other occasional responses went too far chronologically for a consequence by linking the Bay of Pigs directly as the main cause for the setting up of the 'hotline', détente or the SALT negotiations.

For Question 01(b) most candidates at Level 2 explained how the Olympic Boycotts in the early 1980s contributed to the souring of superpower relations at a time of rapidly growing tension. These analytical explanations (AO2) were normally supported with specific information showing good knowledge and understanding (AO1) of Carter's role, the US led boycott of over 60 countries of the 1980 Moscow games or the USSR's and its satellite states then not participating in the 1984 Los Angeles games. Candidates could still gain Level 2 with reference to only one of the boycotts. Some candidates wrote about the USA's mockery of the USSR's games and referred to the media's use of 'gulag bear.' At Level 1 there were mainly basic or generalized comments on the Olympic boycotts leading to increasing tensions between the superpowers but without any inclusion of information about the topic. Similarly to Question 01(a) there were some unrewardable responses which commented solely on the reasons (causation) behind the boycotts such as the failure to implement SALT II and the USSR's invasion of Afghanistan.

1 (a) Explain **one** consequence of the Bay of Pigs incident (1961).

(4)

One consequence was that it made Kennedy look weak. This was his failed attempt at the invasion in Cuba and was seen as a weak leader as well as making Castro and Khrushchev look strong. This was important as it may have led to an increase in tensions.

(b) Explain **one** consequence of the Olympic boycotts in the early 1980s for superpower relations.

(4)

One consequence was that America didn't want to compete and this was because they didn't want to compete against or go alongside the USSR. This was important as it also led to an increase in tensions.



1a analyses features of the period to explain a consequence with comments, 'look weak', 'failed attempt' and 'increase in tension' to reach AO2 at Level 2. Specific information about the topic is added to support the explanation with information such as Kennedy, Cuba (not included in question), Castro and Khrushchev. The responses therefore reaches AO1 at Level 2. This gives an overall 4 marks. 1b reaches Level 2 for AO2 as it explains how the US did not want to compete and as a consequence led to increasing tension. This response remains Level 1 for AO1 and the overall mark is low Level 2 and 3 marks.

1 (a) Explain **one** consequence of the Bay of Pigs incident (1961).

(4)

One consequence of the Bay of Pigs was that it failed. For example, the invasion was to be done to look like other people had but was really people of that country. In addition it just failed as more people did anything about it.

(b) Explain **one** consequence of the Olympic boycotts in the early 1980s for superpower relations.

(4)

One consequence of the of the olympic boycotts where that tensions got worse. For example, this made the tensions worse as they were boycotting the olympic games. In addition this made tensions worse.



Question 01(a) reaches Level 1 at AO2 for a basic comment about a consequence "It failed". It does not have any additional information for AO1. It is therefore Level 1 and 1 mark. Question 01(b) reaches Level 1 at AO2 for a basic comment about a consequence, "tensions got worse". There is no additional information for AO1 so the overall the response is Level 1 and 1 mark.

Question 2

Question 02 focuses on an analytical narrative and the AO2 concepts of causation, consequence and change. The question includes two stimulus points and focuses on a specific period when key events, developments and ideas can be analysed as a sequence of events leading to an outcome (AO2). The narrative offered by the candidate does not necessarily need to cover the entire period stated in the question but material outside of the stipulated time frame is unrewardable. To be awarded Level 3 for AO1 (information, knowledge and understanding) candidates must address three more aspects of content. Although most candidates do use the two stimulus points for aspects of content, they do not necessarily have to use those provided. In this examination the question focused on US-Soviet relations in the years 1941-45 with the Grand Alliance and the Potsdam Conference as the stimulus provided.

At Level 3 most candidates used both the Grand Alliance as an aspect content to begin their analytical narrative and used the Potsdam Conference or the USA's use of atomic bombs on Japan as the end point. The other most common aspects of content used were the Tehran and Yalta conferences, ideological differences between the superpowers, and Stalin and Truman's attitudes. At Level 3 AO2 responses had a coherent and logical structure and showed how at the start of the period the USA and USSR worked together against a common enemy, relations were then largely amicable but with some issues developing and by 1945 US-Soviet relations had significantly deteriorated. For AO1 at Level 3 candidates often had impressive knowledge and understanding of agreements made at Tehran, the agreements made at Yalta regarding the post-war division of Germany and Stalin's stated commitment to holding free elections in Poland as well as emerging disagreements such as on reparations from Germany and Poland's borders. At Level 3 candidates had a clear understanding of how US-Soviet relations were tense by the time of the Potsdam Conference due to Truman's attitude towards the USSR together with Stalin's growing fears of the West with the USA's development of the atomic bomb. At this Level very few responses included material on events or developments outside of the timeframe given in the question.

Mid to high Level 2 responses tended to either rely entirely on the Grand Alliance and Potsdam Conference and therefore did not have the necessary third or more aspect of content necessary to be awarded Level 3 or had a narrative that lacked coherence with, for example, an inaccurate chronological order of the conferences. At Level 2 there was also often a list of events or developments with limited analysis of linkage between them and simply stating 'firstly', 'secondly' and so on. There were also a number of candidates at Level 2 that included unrewardable material on post-1945 such Churchill's 'Iron Curtain' speech, the Long and Novikov telegrams, the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan and the Berlin Blockade. At Level 1 most candidates either added some limited knowledge to one of the stimulus points and/or simply asserted that relations became worse or wrote a short description of either the Grand Alliance or the Potsdam Conference and therefore without any indication of a narrative.

- 2 Write a narrative account analysing the key developments in US-Soviet relations in the years 1941–45.

(8)

You **may** use the following in your answer:

- the Grand Alliance
- the Potsdam Conference (July–August 1945)

You **must** also use information of your own.

The Grand Alliance consisted of England, the US, and the USSR and was of utmost importance during WWII. At this point, relations between the US and the USSR are very high and both countries respect each other. An example of this respect was at the Tehran conference as an attack was planned on the West side of Germany to take pressure off the USSR, and the USSR agreed to start war on Japan once the war in Europe was over. These are both acts of great respect as the countries attempt to benefit each other any way they can.

During the Yalta conference, US and Soviet relations still remained at a high peak as between England, the US and the USSR. They agreed to how Germany should be run and that the USSR could keep the land that it invaded in Poland during the war. And it was agreed that Germany was to be split into four parts, one for France, one

for the USSR, and one for England, one for the US. It was also agreed that profits and resources would be sent to the USSR part, as their land was the least ~~developed~~ industrialised.

However, during the Potsdam conference, US-Soviet relations dipped because the USSR was less trusted by England and the US. At Potsdam, it was agreed that Berlin would also be split into four parts, one for each nation although it was in USSR territory. This may have sparked anger in Stalin, leading to the distrust on him. It was theorised by England and the US that Stalin may try to invade the same countries Hitler did.



This response has a clear narrative organising material into a clear sequence of events with analysis of linkage between them with comments such as 'at this point', 'still remained', 'however during' and 'sparked anger'. The response is therefore Level 3 for AO2. There is accurate and relevant information throughout the response showing good knowledge and understanding for AO1 to be awarded at Level 3. The overall response is therefore high Level 3 and 8 marks

For Question 02 candidates need to ensure they establish a beginning, middle and end for their narrative response and utilise language which helps analyse the links between the events and not just list the events one after the other. The candidate's narrative should be within the timeframe of the question (there is no stipulation that they must cover the whole period stated in the question) and any content outside of the timeframe is not rewardable.

- 2 Write a narrative account analysing the key developments in US-Soviet relations in the years 1941–45.**

(8)

You **may** use the following in your answer:

- the Grand Alliance
- the Potsdam Conference (July–August 1945)

You **must** also use information of your own.

The Grand Alliance was when most of the nations came to getting to agree that they wouldn't fight each other. This led to them discussing how to split Germany up. As a result Stalin was annoyed because he thought that he had gotten the poor side of Germany.



There is a weak sequence of events from the setting up of the Grand Alliance, to discussions and Stalin becoming annoyed, for weak AO2 at Level 2. There is some accurate and relevant information for AO1 on 'splitting' Germany up and Stalin with 'the poor side of Germany.' This gives a low Level 2 mark of 3.

Question 3

Question 03 focuses on significance by asking candidates to explain the importance of an event, individual or development in relation to the situation and/or unfolding developments. Candidates are expected to explain what difference the event, individual or development made to the identified situation and/or development. Candidates answer any two questions from a choice of three.

The first option focused on the importance of Comecon (1949) for the development of the Cold War. At Level 3 candidates showed an analysis of importance (AO2) with comments such as its purpose in developing the economies of the USSR's satellite states, its role in increasing tension between the superpowers and its reinforcing of the division of Europe into two rival camps. At Level 3 responses often included accurate and relevant information such as its establishment as a means for the USSR to compete with the Marshall Plan and very frequent references to 'dollar imperialism', its role in dissuading trade between the communist states in eastern Europe and the West and how it gave Moscow more control over the governments of the Eastern Bloc. At this Level a significant number of responses also included how it was also criticised by the West as a means for the USSR to actually exploit the resources of its satellite states. Level 2 responses tended to have some knowledge and understanding of COMECON but with a much less secure analysis of its importance for the development of the Cold War. At this Level there were also some scripts that, rather than responding to the nature of Question 03, gave a description or even a narrative of the period on events such as the Berlin Blockade and the formation of NATO. Level 1 responses were generally assertions such as 'it increased tension' or 'the USA did not like it.'

The second option focused on the importance of attempts at nuclear arms control in the years 1963-68 for superpower relations. At Level 3 candidates showed an analysis of importance (AO2) with comments such as an increasing sense of co-operation, the reduction of tensions and the foundations being laid for SALT negotiations and for what would become known as the period of détente. In terms of knowledge and understanding at Level 3 most responses showed accurate details on key areas such as the Limited Test Ban Treaty, the Outer Space Treaty, and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Level 2 responses tended to have some knowledge and understanding of some attempts at arms control but with a more narrative account and with an attempt at analysis with comments such as improving relations and reductions in spending on nuclear arms. At this Level many candidates also included a lot of information on SALT and sometimes the main events during the period of détente. Level 1 responses were generally assertions about such how tensions were reduced or basic comments on preventing the dangers of nuclear conflict.

The third option focused on the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989) for the end of the Cold War. At Level 3 candidates showed an analysis of importance (AO2) with comments such as the leading to the demise of the USSR's control of the eastern bloc, the end of the division of Europe into East and West, the lead-up to the reunification of Germany and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. In terms of knowledge and understanding at Level 3 most responses showed accurate details on the impact of Gorbachev's beliefs on the rapidly changing situation, meetings between the USSR and the USA, and the fall of Honecker in the GDR. Level 2 responses tended to have some knowledge and understanding of some aspects relevant to the overall question but often focused far more on the impact of the fall of the Berlin Wall on Germany itself with more implicit links to the end of the Cold War. These responses also tended to be a more narrative account and with an attempt

at analysis. At low Level 2 many candidates also included a lot of information on the nature of the Berlin Wall itself. It was clear that some candidates had misread the question to be on the importance of the actual building of the Berlin Wall for the Cold War rather than on the fall of the Berlin Wall. At Level 1 responses were generally basic or generalised comments on families and friends being able to meet each other once again.

Indicate your FIRST choice on this page.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.

- ☒ The importance of Comecon (1949) for the development of the Cold War.
- ☒ The importance of attempts at nuclear arms control in the years 1963–68 for superpower relations.
- ☒ The importance of the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989) for the end of the Cold War.

One importance of comecon was that it led to ~~a divide~~ ^{the brain} ~~in drain~~ ^{in the} ~~wealth~~ ^{between} ~~east and west~~. for example The Soviets formed comecon in 1949 as a response to the Marshall plan in 1947 prompting Stalin to forbid any Warsaw pact member from accepting ^{American} the aid. This is significant as it made it so that no eastern european nation would be allowed to accept any of the aid from the USA. Therefore they would have to result in taking aid from the USSR which was as sufficient as the American aid. Which means that the Eastern European countries would grow poorer and then the West prompting people to migrate from the East to the West and causing the East to lose skilled workers in

The brain drain in the 1950s causing the cold war to develop as tensions increased as a result.

Another importance of Comecon in 1949 is that it caused Europe to become more divided and increased tension between east and west. For example due to Comecon the Eastern European nations could only trade with other nations in Eastern Europe. This is significant as it divides the continent of Europe economically as the two sides became isolated from each other economically. Therefore building resentment between east and west ~~and causing~~ due to the isolation from each other ~~therefore prompting~~ which means that tension between the two super powers would increase as a result of further developing in cold wars.

Indicate your SECOND choice on this page.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.

- ☒ The importance of Comecon (1949) for the development of the Cold War.
- ☒ The importance of attempts at nuclear arms control in the years 1963–68 for ^{Outer space treaty} superpower relations.
- ☒ The importance of the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989) for the end of the Cold War. ^{Nuclear non proliferation}

One importance of the attempts at nuclear arms control is that it may have caused inspiration for détente. For example after the Cuban missile crisis both sides wanted to avoid mutually assured destruction (MAD) as it would lead to the end and the destruction of everything they built causing them to sign the outer space treaty in 1967. This is significant as it would make the two sides more willing to work with each other and reduce the risk M.A.D. therefore causing them to ~~start to~~ try and increase ~~an~~ relations and reduce tensions between them leading to détente ^{and SALT}. Therefore causing relations between the USA and the USSR to increase and reducing tension.

Another importance of Nuclear arms control is that it led to a greater sense of safety ^{between} among the ~~the~~ two sides. For example both sides signed the Nuclear non-proliferation treaty in 1968 which made regulations and controls on each sides nuclear weapons. This is significant as it would reduce the risk of nuclear war as it showed that both sides wanted to reduce the risk of M.A.D. Therefore causing them to feel more safe and reassured that nuclear war would be less likely. ~~and~~ which means that tensions would decrease between the two sides due to this feeling of safety they would have.



The response reaches AO2 at Level 3 with an explanation analysing the importance with comments on leading to a more divided Europe and the idea of retaliation. The line of reasoning is coherent and logically structured. There is also good knowledge and understanding with comments on 'the brain drain' which was also evident during the 1950s and the loss of skilled workers that followed. AO1 at Level 3 is also shown AO1 with a clear understanding of the key features and characteristics of the period. The response is therefore Level 3 and 8 marks. The second response shows analysis of importance for AO2 at Level 3 with 'make the two sides more willing to work with each other' and 'led to a greater sense of safety between the two sides.' The second response shows analysis of a good range of knowledge and understanding of the required features of the period for AO1 at Level 3 as well as accurate information, for example on MAD and the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Indicate your FIRST choice on this page.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.

- ☒ The importance of Comecon (1949) for the development of the Cold War.
- ☒ The importance of attempts at nuclear arms control in the years 1963–68 for superpower relations.
- ☒ The importance of the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989) for the end of the Cold War.

One reason why Comecon was important for the development of the Cold War was due to the support it got. For example, Comecon is the USSR's version of the Marshall Plan, and was therefore used to get countries to support communism and contain capitalism. Stalin did this to gain as much control over as many countries as possible. This means that the USSR were frightened into losing their power and tried anyway to overcome it. As a result, comecon lost support in the Cold War.

One reason why Comecon was important for the development of the Cold War was because it increased tensions. For example, both USSR and USA were handing out money to promote their

Countries power and contain their enemies.
This meant that they were both constantly
competing over one another and as a
result tensions increased.

Indicate your **SECOND** choice on this page.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.

- ☐ The importance of Comecon (1949) for the development of the Cold War.
- ☐ The importance of attempts at nuclear arms control in the years 1963–68 for superpower relations.
- ☒ The importance of the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989) for the end of the Cold War.

One reason why the fall of the Berlin
Wall was important for the end of the
Cold War was because it relieved tension
For example, the USSR no longer had any
control over those in their country and
therefore were losing their power. As
~~a result~~ This meant that the USA
was gaining support and therefore
became more powerful than USSR
and this therefore showed the USSR
that they could no longer win.
As a result, tensions decreased between
USSR and USA, ending the Cold War.



The first response gives an explanation analysing the importance (AO2 – Level 3) The first paragraph shows Comecon as a result of the Marshall Plan and Stalin's retaliation 'frightened into losing their power and trying to lose their power'. The second paragraph expands on the importance of Comecon by explaining the increase in tension 'constantly competing over one another'. The response is Level 3 but lacking in range and depth of detail: AO1 is L2. This is an example of the 'best fit' approach. The second response shows an attempt at analysing importance for AO2 at Level 2 with 'it relieved tensions' and 'therefore were losing their power'. For AO1 the response is also at Level 2, showing some understanding of the period with the sense that the USSR is losing control over their sphere of influence ('over those in their country', 'can't win', and 'could no longer win'. The overall mark is therefore mid-Level 2 and 4 marks.

Paper Summary

Based on the performance across all the five Period Study papers, candidates are offered the following advice:

1. Try to attempt to answer all the required questions.
2. On Question 02 keep to the date range specified in the question and in your narrative include an aspect of content which is not covered by the stimulus points provided.
3. On Question 03 briefly take some time to consider your choice of questions to answer and focus on what difference the development, event or individual made to the focus given in the second part of the question.

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>

