

GCE History guidance document: advice on A2 Unit 3

Introduction

This guidance is provided in addition to that already published in Getting Started as several teachers have asked for further clarification on the approach to Unit 3, in particular the associated controversies.

Unit 3 is divided into two sections; Section A and Section B.

Section A of the examination focuses on knowledge and understanding of a historical period and the ability to make and sustain judgements about the key issues and features within it.

Section B of the examination deals with historical controversies, the nature of historical debates and the ways in which the past can be interpreted differently. Candidates are required to analyse and evaluate different interpretations in order to develop a judgement.

Whilst the designated controversies in Section B are linked with the period studied in Section A, for the purposes of examination the content is separated.

Section A examines content specified in the first four bullet points in the specification; Section B examines the content specified in the associated controversies. Questions on Section B content will not appear in Section A and vice versa.

For example

D1 From Kaiser to Fuhrer: Germany 1900-45

Section A content:

- The Second Reich - society and government in Germany, c1900-19: economic expansion, political and social tensions; the impact of the First World War.
- The democratic experiment, 1919-29; crises and survival, 1919-24; Stresemann and recovery; the 'Golden Years' of the Weimar Republic; Weimar culture.
- The rise of the Nazis: origins to 1928; impact of the slump in town and country, 1928-33; growing support; coming to power.
- Life in wartime Germany, 1939-45: opposition and conformity; persecution of the Jews and the development of the idea of the 'Final Solution'; the efficiency of the war economy.

Section B Associated Controversies:

- a) To what extent was Germany responsible for the outbreak of the First World War?
- b) How popular and efficient was the Nazi regime in the years 1933-39?

The controversy topics of the origins of the First World War and the popularity and efficiency of the Nazi regime 1933-39 do not appear in Section A. They will only appear in Section B and coverage of the years 1933-39 is therefore omitted from the four specification bullet points.

Edexcel has provided schemes of work for all Unit 3 options which are available on the [website](#) and which exemplify this division of content for teaching purposes.

Question pattern and choice

Section A: Students answer one essay question out of a choice of two. Questions will often be focussed on one of the four bullet points but they may go across bullet points. Each examination will therefore target at least two specification bullet points and may target three or four. Teachers must cover all four bullet points in the teaching of Section A content.

Section B: There will always be a question on each controversy. Teachers may choose to cover just one controversy, but the implication of this is that students will have no choice in the examination.

Dividing time between Section A and Section B

The total time available for the Unit 3 examination is 2 hours. It is recommended that students allow 5 minutes for planning in Section A and 15 minutes for reading and planning in Section B, giving themselves approximately equal writing times for the two Sections A and B ie 50 minutes for each.

Section A

The questions in Section A target Assessment Objective 1 only. AO1 is split into two parts:

AO1a - the ability to recall, select and deploy historical knowledge and understanding of history in a clear and effective manner.

AO1b - the ability to demonstrate understanding of the past through explanation, analysis and arriving at substantiated judgements of:

- Key concepts such as causation, consequence, continuity, change and significance within an historical context.
- The relationships between key features and characteristics of the periods studied.

Assessment in Unit 3 Section A addresses AO1 as a single objective and therefore corresponds closely to assessment in Unit 1, but with significant differences. Questions in Unit 3 Section A are appropriately more demanding in the greater complexity of the questioning, and the higher level demands of the mark scheme. AS candidates are not expected to produce the qualities described in Level 5 of the A2 scheme.

The following table outlines the levels of progression as given in the Section A generic mark scheme.

Level	Descriptor	Comments
1	Candidates will produce a <i>series of statements</i> , some of which may be simplified. The statements will be supported by <i>factual material which has some accuracy and relevance</i> although <i>not directed at the focus of the question</i> . The material will be mostly generalised.	A limited amount of material will be offered. It will relate to the topic of the question, but not to the focus. For example, in a question asking <i>'How far do you agree with the view that the Ku Klux Klan had little impact on US society in the 1920s?'</i> the response is likely to offer information about the Klan, but not deal with 'impact'. Information will not be extensive.
2	Candidates will produce <i>statements with some development</i> in the form of mostly accurate and relevant factual material. There will be some analysis, <i>but focus on the analytical demand of the question will be largely implicit</i> . Candidates will attempt to make links between the statements and the material is unlikely to be developed very far.	Answers at this level provide quite extensive information, but often in a descriptive or narrative form. For example in the question cited above, statements on the KKK in the 1920s will have either only implicit reference to its impact or argument based on insufficient evidence. Links to the question focus will be asserted, rather than shown. The candidate may maintain that the impact of the Klan was significant, but without developed comment - assuming that information about the size of its membership is self evident in demonstrating its impact.
3	Candidates' answers will be <i>broadly analytical</i> and will show <i>some understanding of the focus</i> of the question. They may, however, include material which is either descriptive, and thus only implicitly relevant to the question's focus, or which strays from that focus in places. Factual material will be accurate, but it may not consistently display depth and/or relevance.	Answers at this level organise material in some paragraphs clearly directed at the question focus. Relevant point, supporting evidence and related comment linked to the question can be found in the majority of the paragraphs, in spite of weaker passages.
4	Candidates offer an <i>analytical response which relates well to the focus of the question</i> and which <i>shows some understanding of the key issues contained in it with some evaluation of argument</i> . The <i>analysis will be supported</i> by accurate factual material which will be mostly relevant to the question asked. The selection of material may lack balance in places.	At this level answers have the characteristic of explored work. Issues are raised and a discussion is begun. For example in a question <i>'It was the severity of the economic crisis which brought Hitler to power'</i> <i>How far do you agree with this judgment?</i> candidates will deal with the stated factor and explore the range of ways the economic crisis had an impact. They will appreciate that the question is about why Hitler was appointed by Hindenburg and not just why the Nazis were able to garner in the votes. The answer will never lose sight of the question focus, although it may lack balance.

5	<p>Candidates offer a <i>sustained analysis which directly addresses the focus</i> of the question. They demonstrate <i>explicit understanding of the key issues</i> raised by the question, <i>evaluating arguments</i> and - as appropriate - interpretations. The <i>analysis will be supported by an appropriate range and depth</i> of accurate and well-selected factual material.</p>	<p>At this level the discussion is developed, balanced and fully explored. For example in dealing with the question of Hitler's rise to power, a range of factors will be fully explored. For example in examining the thesis that he was levered into power by members of the old elite, frightened of growing Communist support or in the case of the Army worried by the prospect of a civil war that they would not be able to contain the candidate will show that both of these can be related to the severity of the economic crisis - and hence the implications of the crisis will be fully explored beyond the more obviously related issues of the pattern of electoral support and popular support. There will be evaluative analysis with a balanced debate on the proposition contained in the question.</p>
---	--	--

Question Types

Broadly Speaking, the Section A essay questions present students with one of two kinds of challenge: some of the questions call for an analysis of the causes, or perhaps the causes and consequences, of an historical event or episode; other questions require students to make and justify an historical judgement about, for example, the significance of a key event or individual.

There is detailed guidance on pages 10-12 of Getting Started on the type of essay questions that may be asked in Section A.

See Appendix 1: Advice to Students on approaching Section A questions

The extracts from answers below give examples to show the difference between a response awarded level three and a response awarded level five. The students are answering the question:

How far did détente introduce a new era of co-operation in US - Soviet relations during the 1970s?

Paragraphs	Comments
<p>Extract 1</p> <p>Possibly the best evidence to suggest that détente brought about an era of co-operation would have to be the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaties (SALT), [1] the first of which being signed in 1972, the second in 1979. Both powers were beginning to realise that the cost of the arms race was becoming too great to continue, and that some form of arms control was needed. This requisite resulted in SALT, which fixed the number of ICBMs both sides possessed, with another clause of the treaty also limiting the number of anti-ballistic missile systems possessed by the two countries to two apiece. [2] SALT II was effectively a carrying on of SALT I, which banned new missile programs and limited the use of strategic missile launchers. <i>What made these Treaties special was that, unlike previous attempts to slow the arms race such as at the 1955 Geneva Conference, an agreement was actually reached and the policies actually followed through with [3]; this would likely represent a new period of US-Soviet co-operation. Its relatively easy passing also supports the theory that this was a new era of co-operation.</i></p>	<p>[1] The student begins the paragraph with a clear link to the question, giving an example of co-operation between the superpowers.</p> <p>[2] The student provides relevant information. So far the response indicates work at level two - the student can make a statement about improved co-operation supported by relevant information.</p> <p>[3] The student explains the link to the question - how the treaties represented new co-operation. The student has begun to identify criteria by which to analyse and evaluate 'co-operation'. This passage in italics indicates L3 qualities - the ability to comment on the material shows understanding of the focus of the question - an assessment of a 'new' era of co-operation.</p> <p>To progress to higher levels, this element must be further developed, with a discussion of 'how far' the treaties indicate a new era of co-operation.</p>

Extract 2

[In the previous passage the student has suggested the cooperation was superficial in nature]

... Nevertheless the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT) did represent an agreement [1] between the US and the Soviet Union in three key areas. Firstly, the ABM Treaty *reduced the tension* caused by the destabilising impact of anti-ballistic missile (ABM) systems. Whilst ABM systems were limited to just two sites in each country, the systems still acted as a deterrent as the ability of each side to strike back in the event of a missile being deployed was maintained. Secondly, the Interim Treaty placed limits on the number of missiles which each side was allowed to have at its disposal, although the treaty would expire in 1977. *A significant shortcoming, however,* is that it failed to consider technological advances which could be made in the meantime concerning new weapons which would not be regulated under the SALT. Finally, the Basic Principles Agreement laid down some important rules concerning the conduct of nuclear warfare. The US and USSR both agreed to "do their utmost to avoid military confrontations" - [2] *marking an important shift in attitudes even if this statement contained little substance.* Importantly, this part of the SALT also stated that trade was to be encouraged between the two nations, and *this resulted in arguably the most positive example of cooperation in the détente era.* The overall value of US-Soviet trade jumped from \$67 million in 1971 to a staggering \$470 million two years later. For the USSR, détente was a means of increasing trade with the West, developing the Soviet economy and raising the standard of living across the country, whilst maintaining its Communist ideology. The agreement on trade was similarly convenient for the United States; with a weakening US Dollar and a fast-increasing budget deficit, the Soviet bloc could prove to be a lucrative new market for American goods.[3] *Therefore, the SALT shows that détente helped to introduce a new era of US-Soviet cooperation in the 1970s, but only to a certain extent. Trade between the two countries had been limited before détente,*

[1] The student is providing precise details analysing the nature of the agreement between the superpowers. The passages in italics show the student's application of valid criteria by which to assess SALT in terms of 'new era'.

[2] The passages in italics indicate evaluate comment, exploring the extent of change

[3] An explicit judgment is made in relation to the question, on the basis of the preceding well-supported analysis

If this quality is sustained throughout the work, the answer will merit level five.

but the SALT caused a substantial increase in trade - indeed, subsequent visits by Nixon to Moscow and by Brezhnev to Washington symbolised a new spirit of co-operation following détente. However, other elements of the SALT were temporary and vague, arguably showing détente to be little more than a mutually satisfying thawing of relations for financial reasons.

[this last comment provides linkage to the next paragraph, where the student deals with the difficult and short-lived agreement SALT II. The paragraph ends with the comment...]

[3] 'Therefore, the years following Nixon's resignation proved that, instead of introducing a new era of cooperation in US-Soviet relations, détente had marked the onset of a brief period of co-operation between the two countries largely driven by the agenda of President Nixon - in reality, little had been achieved in terms of improving relations.'

Section B

The questions in Section B target AO1a and b, and AO2b.

AO2b assesses the analysis and evaluation of interpretations and representations of History. Students should be aware of why the issue they have studied is controversial, and they should understand the key issues which make the topic controversial as a matter of historical debate. It is this element of students' knowledge of the controversy which gains them credit in relation to AO2b.

Key features of Section B requirements:

- Questions in Section B require students to make and support an informed judgement relating to an historical interpretation. In doing this, students will be expected to cross-reference the sources, comparing, contrasting and evaluating the views provided in the source material, integrating the material from the sources with their own knowledge in the process of exploring and reaching a judgement.
- Each question in Section B will be based on two or three secondary sources. There are no primary sources in Unit 3, and students are not expected to comment on the reliability, validity and provenance of the sources provided. Students are expected to evaluate the claims made in the sources, not their authorship.
- Teachers should not regard the requirements of Section B section as being an historiographical study. This is not the case and it is perfectly possible for a student to reach the highest level without historiographical references. Such references may gain credit, but as with other evidence used by a student, it is the effectiveness of deployment that ultimately determines the mark awarded.
- Students are not required to reel off a list of historians or a list of interpretations. They are also not required to recognise Historians, or different interpretations such as Marxist or revisionist interpretations in the provided sources.
- Students should be able to adopt a multi-causal / multi-faceted approach and recognise that different writers or often different extracts from different writers lay emphasis on different factors or aspects. They are required to recognise the differences in the views and/or differences in the emphasis in the extracts with which they are presented.
- It is important therefore that they understand that there has been controversy over various aspects of the topic and that they understand the range of factors with which they may be presented in differing discussions of cause, change, impact or significance.

For example, note how the sources below provide differences of view and emphasis. They relate to the question:

Use Sources 1, 2 and 3 and your own knowledge.

How far do you agree with the view that the Cold War came to an end because of Mikhail Gorbachev's new approach to US-Soviet relations in the mid- to late 1980s?

Explain your answer using the evidence of sources 1, 2 and 3 and your own knowledge of this controversy (40 marks)

Source	Comments
<p>Source 1</p> <p>(From Robert J McMahon, <i>The Cold War</i>, published in 2003)</p> <p>The accession, in March 1985, of Mikhail Gorbachev to the position of General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party stands as the <i>most critical turning point</i> in the Cold War's final phase - <i>the one factor, above all others</i>, that hastened the end of the Cold War and the radical transformation in Soviet-American relations that accompanied it. The dynamic Gorbachev <i>made virtually all of the major concessions that led to the landmark arms reduction</i> agreements in the late 1980s. Through a series of <i>wholly unexpected initiatives</i> and concessions, he <i>succeeded in changing the entire nature of the Soviet-American relationship</i>, in the end depriving the United States of the supposedly expansionist enemy it had been seeking to thwart for the past 45 years. <i>Remove this remarkable individual, and the astonishing changes of the 1985-90 period become nearly inconceivable.</i></p>	<p>The italicised points show McMahon's emphasis on the role of Gorbachev - 'initiative', 'unexpected', 'remarkable individual' emphasise his personal influence, 'factor above all others', 'changing entire relationship', 'astonishing changes' indicate the importance of Gorbachev's role. These led McMahon to conclude that the changes were 'nearly inconceivable' without Gorbachev.</p>
<p>Source 2</p> <p>(from Mike Sewell, <i>The Cold War</i>, published in 2002)</p> <p>With hindsight, <i>the mid-1980s can be seen as the beginning of the end of the Cold War</i>. It did not seem that way at the time, but the deployment of Euro missiles, SDI, US aid to anti-Soviet forces in Afghanistan, and other <i>initiatives of the first Reagan administration, laid the basis for two linked developments</i>. First, they created the <i>position of strength from which Western leaders felt that they could now negotiate</i>. Second, they <i>increased the pressure on the new Soviet leadership to seek a breathing space</i> in foreign affairs so that domestic reforms could be given a chance to take hold. <i>Fear of the costs of matching SDI</i> and the destabilising effect it would have on deterrence and weapons parity <i>played a crucial part</i>.</p>	<p>It is important to note that source 2 is not incompatible with source 1, but its emphasis is different. Sewell emphasises the initiatives of the Reagan administration as 'laying the basis' for what followed, and in particular on 'increasing the pressure on the Soviet leadership'</p> <p>While source 1 emphasises Gorbachev's initiatives, source 2 emphasises the pressures put on the soviet leadership 'to seek a breathing space'</p>

Source 3

(From Jeremy Isaacs and Taylor Downing, *Cold War*, published in 1998)

At the beginning of 1989 the Iron Curtain still divided Europe, as it had done for more than 40 years. By the end of the year, the leaders of every Eastern European nation except Bulgaria, which soon followed suit, had been *ousted by popular uprisings*; in every case, *the will of the people had prevailed* and, except in Romania, hardly a drop of blood was spilt. With dizzying speed, the Soviet Union's European empire, the buffer zone ruthlessly built up by Stalin and maintained with brutal force when necessary by his successors, had collapsed.

The emphasis here is on popular uprisings as a factor in the ending of divisions in Europe. This does not directly challenge comments in sources 1 and 2 which indicate that Reagan's policies and Gorbachev's initiatives were influential. Instead, it adds another piece to the jigsaw of interacting factors which brought about the end of the Cold War.

The following table outlines the levels of progression as given in the Section B generic mark scheme.

AO1 a and b

The scheme follows the same hierarchy as in part A, but with the additional requirement to organise the answer to link and integrate own knowledge with the provided sources. Only these additional qualities are highlighted below.

Level	Descriptor	Comments
1	Candidates will produce a series of statements, some of which may be simplified, on the basis of factual material which has some accuracy and relevance although not directed at the focus of the question. <i>Links with the presented source material will be implicit at best.</i> The factual material will be mostly generalised and there will be few, if any, links between the statements.	Answers will deploy own knowledge in paragraphs separate from those using material from the sources. Or if material from the sources is present in the paragraph, it is not linked.
2	Candidates will produce statements deriving from their own knowledge <i>and may attempt to link this with the presented source material.</i> Knowledge will have some accuracy and relevance. There may be some analysis, but focus on the analytical demand of the question will be largely implicit. Candidates will attempt to make links between the statements and the material is unlikely to be developed very far.	Material from own knowledge will be added to that provided in the sources. This may or may not be present in the same paragraph. Linkage is likely to take the form of relating to information rather than argument in the sources (I also know that)
3	Candidates attempt a <i>broadly analytical response from their own knowledge, which offers some support for the presented source material.</i> Knowledge will be generally accurate and relevant. The answer will show some understanding of the focus of the question but may include material which is either descriptive, and is only implicitly relevant to the question's focus, or which strays from that focus in places. Attempts at analysis will be supported by generally accurate factual material which will lack balance in places.	At this level information will be linked to the analysis in the sources, ie relating to points made in the sources. It may be in a separate paragraph. (my own knowledge also suggests that....)
4	Candidates offer an analytical response from their own knowledge <i>which supports analysis of presented source material and which attempts integration with it.</i> Knowledge will be generally well-selected and accurate and will have some range and depth. The selected material will address the focus of the question and show some understanding of the key issues contained in it with some evaluation of argument and - as	At this levels the answer will use own knowledge and material from the sources to discuss issues which an analysis of the sources raises (ie relating to the differences of emphasis and view when sources are compared as well relating to the arguments contained within a single source). This will often be in the same paragraph, and sometimes in the same sentence.

	appropriate - interpretation. The analysis will be supported by accurate factual material which will be mostly relevant to the question asked although the selection of material may lack balance in places.	
5	<p>Candidates offer a sustained analysis from their own knowledge <i>which both supports, and is integrated with, analysis of the presented source materials.</i> Knowledge will be well-selected, accurate and of appropriate range and depth. The selected material will be well-selected, accurate and of appropriate range and depth. The selected material directly addresses the focus of the question. Candidates demonstrate explicit understanding of the key issues raised by the question, evaluating arguments and as a appropriate - interpretations. The analysis will be supported by an appropriate range and depth of accurate and well-selected factual material.</p>	<p>At this level the answer will combine own knowledge with material from the sources to discuss issues which an analysis of the sources raises. This will certainly be in the same paragraph, and often in the same sentence, though of course additional paragraphs from own knowledge may be present which relate to relevant issues not raised by the presented sources.</p>

A02

Level	Descriptor	Comments
1	Comprehends the <i>surface features</i> of sources and selects from them in order to identify points which support or differ from the view posed in the question. When reaching a decision in relation to the question the sources will be <i>used singly</i> and in the form of a summary of their information. Own knowledge of the issue under debate will be presented as information but not integrated with the provided material.	Answers select details from the sources rather than points of analysis or argument. Sources are used one by one rather than compared. Information derived from own knowledge is not linked to source content.
2	Comprehends the sources and <i>notes points of challenge and support</i> for the stated claim. Combines the information from the sources to illustrate points linked to the question. When supporting judgements made in relation to the question, <i>relevant source content will be selected</i> and summarised and <i>relevant own knowledge of the issue will be added</i> . The answer may lack balance but one aspect will be developed from the sources. Reaches an overall <i>decision but with limited support</i> .	Answers see that the sources make different points and can select these from the sources. The response is disjointed rather than integrated, but contains relevant information derived both from sources and from own knowledge. A judgment is made in the form of a decision rather than an argued case - and is not always in line with the thrust of the answer.
3	Interprets the sources with confidence, showing the ability to <i>analyse some key points of the arguments</i> offered and <i>to reason from the evidence</i> of the sources. Develops points of challenge and support for the stated claim from the provided source material and deploys material gained from relevant reading and knowledge of the issues under discussion. Shows clear <i>understanding that the issue is one of interpretation</i> . <i>Focuses</i> directly on the question <i>when structuring the response</i> , although, in addressing the specific enquiry, there may be some lack of balance. <i>Reaches a judgement</i> in relation to the claim, <i>supported by information and argument</i> from the sources and from own knowledge of the issues under debate.	At this level the answer begins to consider the basis for the claim made, in the question and engages with issues of interpretation in part of the answer. The sources are used to raise issues and own knowledge is related to them. The judgment made in relation to the claim is in line with the thrust of the answer.
4	Interprets the sources with confidence showing the <i>ability to understand the basis of the arguments</i> offered by the authors and to relate these to wider knowledge of the issues under discussion. Discussion of the claim in the question proceeds from an exploration of the <i>issues raised by the process of analysing the sources and the extension of these issues from other relevant reading</i> and	At this level the answer can cross refer between provided sources and between sources and own knowledge in order to raise issues relevant to the question. The response analyses the thrust of arguments in the provided sources, how they are constructed and how they relate to wider knowledge of the controversy.

	<p>own knowledge of the points under debate. <i>Presents an integrated response with developed reasoning and debating of the evidence</i> in order to create judgements in relation to the stated claim, although not all the issues will be fully developed. Reaches and <i>sustains a conclusion based on the discriminating use of the evidence.</i></p>	<p>The overall conclusion is reached on the basis of discussion of the evidence provided by the sources and that applied to them from own knowledge.</p>
5	<p>Interprets the sources with <i>confidence and discrimination, assimilating the author's arguments and displaying independence of thought</i> in the ability to assess the presented views in the light of own knowledge and reading. Treatment of argument and discussion of evidence will show that the full demands of the question have been appreciated and addressed. <i>Presents a sustained evaluative argument and reaches fully substantiated conclusions</i> demonstrating an understanding of the nature of historical debate.</p>	<p>At this level, analysis, discussion and evaluation of the authors' claims predominate and are sustained throughout the response.</p>

Exemplification

The examples below show extracts from two students' answers to the question (on page 8) on the ending of the cold war.

Extracts from student answers	Comments
<p>Example 1</p> <p>[1] At the dawn of the last decade of the 20th Century, an end to one of the most terrifying conflicts came about (with hardly any actual fighting by either side), accompanied by the fall of the first and largest Communist state in history. Shortly before, the leadership of the Communist empire had been changed yet again, with Gorbachev becoming General Secretary of the Communist party, and it was this new man at the helm that had opened up the negotiations that showed the final stages, and [2] you could say that he alone caused the amnesty with his new approach to handling foreign affairs, as no other world leader tried the approach he employed, of reducing arms and negotiating with the enemy, and indeed no other communist politician of the last 60 years would have done the same. However, could it also be that he had little choice, as the military pressure and superiority from his opponents was too great to match, whilst the economy he was trying to preserve with the other hand was quickly dissolving? Were these factors the ones that pushed him to reaching an agreement with the Americans, or did he accomplish this of his own accord?</p> <p>[3] When it states in Source 1 that Gorbachev's accession to power in Russia "...stands as the most critical turning point in the Cold War's final phase - the one factor... that hastened the end of the Cold War and the transformation in Soviet-American relations that accompanied it", it not only agrees with the question statement but goes on to explain that it was through arms reductions that "deprived the United States of the supposedly expansionist enemy...". This was his new approach, as every other USSR leader up until that point had chosen to be aggressive towards the Americans, and it worked well, as the Western leaders were prepared to negotiate when approached, and it obviously did contribute to the end of the Cold War hugely, because, as the text tells us, these talks heralded and brought to an end this</p>	<p>[1]The introduction adopts a narrative approach which sets the context. While this is acceptable, it does not strengthen the answer, and takes up valuable examination time.</p> <p>[2]Towards the end of the paragraph, the issue which is the focus of the question is outlined. This part of the introduction would be strengthened by an acknowledgement of the claims in the provided sources. Thus far, the answer gives no indication that it will develop any differently from a part A essay answer. However the focus suggests it is operating at level three for AO1.</p> <p>[3] Here is evidence that source 1 is understood. The view is described and linked to the question 'this was his new approach'. The student then goes on to add relevant, but rather generalised, own knowledge to confirm the point that Gorbachev 'deprived the United States of the supposedly expansionist enemy'. The paragraph ends with some implied cross-referencing to either other sources or other knowledge of 'the pressures exerted upon him'</p> <p>These passages show the characteristics of level three for AO1 and AO2.</p> <p>Level five would be achieved by more precision in the deployment of own knowledge, better cross referring between the provided sources, and more developed discussion of the issue of the significance of Gorbachev's 'new approach'.</p>

<p>conflict, as once he had started negotiating with the other side, he agreed to partake in arms reductions, mentioned in the first source and made other concessions simply to end the war. It was he who had the initiative in this. However, it is also important to decide whether he ended the war due to the pressures exerted upon him (see below) or of his own accord.</p>	
<p>Example 2</p> <p>Towards the end of the 1980s, the world saw increasingly positive relations between the two major players in the Cold War that had been taking place since the end of the Second World War, culminating in the fall of the Soviet East and the Iron Curtain. Yet historians since these events have often debated over what it actually was that ended this extensive period of international threat, which is evident in Sources 1, 2 and 3, all of which feature modern historians posing some very different arguments. [1] Some historians, as is stated in the question, attribute the end of the Cold War to Mikhail Gorbachev and his concessive methodology, while others place more importance on the administration of Ronald Reagan in the USA and the fall of the Communist Bloc in Eastern Europe. Either way, it seems most likely that all three of these major factors contributed, but it was the initial raising of the stakes by Reagan that caused Gorbachev to rethink Soviet Policy and bring the Cold War to an end.</p> <p>Nonetheless, Gorbachev's new diplomatic approach did significantly contribute to the end of the Cold War. Source 1, from Robert J. McMahon's <i>The Cold War</i>, contains much evidence to suggest that this was in fact the case.[2] He refers to Gorbachev's accession in 1985 as "the most critical turning point in the Cold War's final phase", giving it the significance of "the one factor, above all others", both of which certainly place importance on the role of Gorbachev in the late 1980s. What McMahon pays the most attention to is Gorbachev's "major concession" and "landmark arms reduction" ending the Cold War by "depriving the United States of the ... expansionist enemy it had been seeking to thwart" Indeed, [3] Gorbachev did bring about several major arms reduction initiatives that brought about the decline in US-Soviet hostility and</p>	<p>[1]The introduction makes clear that a historical controversy is under discussion, identifies the main thrust of the debate, and sets out the line of argument. It could be further strengthened by referring to directly to the arguments in the provided sources.</p> <p>[2] Source 1 is well analysed to show McMahon's argument 'giving it the significance of the one factor above all others'; 'What McMahon pays the most attention to...'</p> <p>[3] Precise own knowledge is deployed here, well integrated into the discussion of Gorbachev's change of policy and role in arms reduction initiatives.</p>

the end of the 1980s. in 1986, at the Reykjavik Summit, an arms conference, Gorbachev proposed to the West a major cutback in Soviet arms spending, which led to the radical proposal of the 'Zero Solution', and programme designed to get rid of all nuclear weapons within a ten-year period. Gorbachev's willingness to disarm was also proven at the Washington Summit a year later and concluded with his speech addressed to the United Nations in New York, whereby he renounced much of his country's previous policy, including the Brezhnev Doctrine (defence of Soviet states against capitalist influence) and the Soviet role in the arms race. Indeed, it was by these means that Gorbachev's importance in the end of the Cold War was highlighted, and this importance is unequivocal. [4] However, it seems that the initial pressures by Reagan in the arms race were what caused the Soviet Union to neglect its economy more and thus need new direction.

The pressure brought about by Reagan seems best supported by Source 2, an extract from Mike Sewell's *The Cold War*. He place large degree of significance on the "initiatives of the first Reagan administration" in the arms race....

[4] The student begins to develop a balanced argument, turning to the significance of 'initial pressures by Reagan' and cross references to source 2.

This response is clearly stronger than example 1 in its ability to analyse and integrate source material in the process of mounting a discussion in relation to the question set. The extract here suggests qualities which, if maintained, will receive L5 for AO1 A and B and L4 for AO2B. To achieve level 5 for AO2, the cross referencing between sources should be more developed and direct.

Answering Section B Questions

In answering questions in Section B students should:

- Analyse and interpret the specified sources to establish points that support and/or challenge the representation contained in the question. The sources should be interpreted in context and cross-referenced as a set.
- Develop each point by reference to wider knowledge; knowledge may be used to reinforce and/or challenge the points derived from the sources.
- Combine the points into arguments for and against the stated view.
- Discuss other relevant factors from own knowledge.
- Evaluate the conflicting views by reference to the quality of argument used, as well as the weight of evidence and range of candidates' knowledge that can be deployed in their support.
- On the basis of this evaluation, present a judgement as to the validity of the stated view and/or any alternatives.

Appendix 1

Advice for students on approach to Section A essay questions

Essay Writing: Think about what is being tested

1. The ability to understand the question

This can address causation, process, situation or consequence. What is the focus of the question?

There may be some 'specialist **vocabulary**' used in the question but these words will be an intrinsic part of the course, eg the phrase 'severity of the economic crisis' in an essay on the impact of the Wall St Crash. If you really can't understand a word or phrase, which you suspect is crucial to the question, answer another question. Even if you prefer the topic to which a question relates, you must be able to direct your information to the question set.

2. The *deployment* of knowledge.

A2 essays require a detailed body of knowledge but this must be deployed in answer to the question set. No essay is ever an invitation to write everything you know about a topic.

3. The ability to structure and express an argument

It is essential to write in paragraphs, each one developing a point in the case being made. A typical essay should have perhaps six or seven paragraphs including an introduction and a conclusion.

4. The ability to evaluate and make a judgement.

It is vital when answering questions which begin with 'How far' or 'To what extent' to examine the case for and the case against. Avoid simplistic, sweeping judgements which are rarely appropriate.

Students should:

- Make a brief plan in which each point can be turned into a paragraph.
- Write a brief introduction which shows focus and if possible hints at a mastery of detail.
- Support assertions with accurate detailed knowledge.
- Offer a balanced evaluation ie points for and points against the proposition under discussion.
- Write a clear and extensive conclusion which answers the question.

Students should not:

- Offer a pre-planned answer to a different question.
- Wander outside the time-frame of the question.
- Run out of time without writing a conclusion.

Examination Tip: If you are running out of time, it may be better to save time in writing your last paragraph short and go on to the conclusion. You could bullet point the evidence in your last paragraph, rather than write complete sentences.

What kind of question are you answering?

A small number of questions will begin 'why' and will clearly be asking you to provide a causal explanation. Most will ask you for a judgment. Success in these will depend firstly on being able to identify what judgment the question is asking you to make. Are you judging causes, consequences changes or perhaps the significance of key features of the period or theme?

'The impact of the First World War merely heightened existing social and political tensions which had divided Germany before 1914.'

How far do you agree with this judgement?

This question is asking for

- *an analysis of key features - social and political tensions*
- *an analysis of impact and change*
- *and a judgment. The key judgment to make relates to 'merely heightened existing' Did the impact of the war bring new tensions? Were existing ones heightened?*

'Why, and how profoundly, did divisions appear in the New Model Army during 1647?'

This question is asking for

- *an analysis of key features - divisions in the New Model Army*
- *An analysis of causation*
- *And a judgment. The judgment to make relates to 'how profound' the divisions were. But any question analysing why something happened also requires you to explore the relative importance of causes, In effect you are being asked for two judgments in this question.*

Appendix 2

Advice for students on approaching Section B questions

The Section B question will test your ability to reach a judgement by analysis, cross-referencing and evaluation of the claims in secondary source material. You will be required to use two or three pieces of source material and your own knowledge to consider a historical view or claim.

You need to make a judgement about the claim in the question.

The issue at the heart of the process is defined in the question, which offers a claim to be tested, but the validity of the claim and the related issues are set out in the sources. Hence the sources must be the starting point for planning a response, and the steps set out below can be followed and practised as part of any programme of study.

Advice for students

1. Read the question and ensure that you fully understand the claim that is being made and the nature of the enquiry.
2. Read the first source and break it down into key points [analysis] that support or challenge the claim made in the question. Do not focus only on what it says, think about what is suggested or implied. Make a brief list of points for and/or against the claim in the question. It is actually quite useful to do this in two columns on a piece of paper. Then, as you work through the sources you can link the references from different sources (cross-reference) into two conflicting arguments, one in each column.
3. Read the second source. Repeat the process as above, but also, look out for any links with the first source. Do you see any implications that agree/disagree with the first source, or help to explain something in it? Add points from this source to your lists.
4. If there is a third source (some questions may only use two) repeat this process and then look at what evidence you have collected in each column and how convincing you think it is. How does it fit together within each column?
5. THEN, AND ONLY THEN, start to plan an answer to the question, using all the points for, and then all the points against the claim. Put in the links between your points and consider the best order for them. Leave time for a conclusion that will summarise and weigh up your evidence, including its reliability.
6. You will need to add to your plan with arguments based on wider knowledge. You can use what you know to develop your points, support or challenge them, and weigh up how convincing they are. Also use own knowledge to add to the range of aspects you consider. **Do not expect the sources to cover all the issues relevant to the questions. You should expect to bring in new points they do not raise.** However, you should still structure your answer centrally around the points that you got out of the sources. In fact, a brief outline of them showing how the sources link to give the points on both sides of the argument makes an excellent introduction to the essay. The marker can see that you have used the sources as a set, and you can keep checking back while you are writing your answer to make sure you cover and develop the points you want to make.

To begin with, this process will take you a bit of time. However, you can practise it (in discussions of sources as well as in practice questions) and the more you use it, the quicker you will get. By the time you come to an exam it should only take you a few minutes extra to reading the sources, and you will more than make up the time by writing a well-focused and directed answer. You always write more quickly when you know where you are going!

Appendix3

Student Handout: Introduction to Controversy

People who don't study history at this level are often puzzled by the idea of controversy among historians, because they see history as being about the 'facts' of 'what happened', and since it happened in the past it must be known and unchangeable. For the same reasons, many people can't see why history matters. Historians, however, do not just study what happened. Rather, they want to know 'what was going on?'. That means looking into areas like the **causes, nature and significance** of events in the past, and those areas are always matters of judgement and opinion, (even when they are concerned with what is going on around us now - for example in Afghanistan, Iran, Parliament, or the City of London).

The problem is, quite simply, that causes, nature and significance are not facts, but **interpretations of the facts**, based on the evidence available.

It may be useful to draw a comparison with a contemporary debate, such as the problem of global warming. Scientists have very clear evidence that global temperatures are rising, but they do not agree on the causes, nature, and significance of what is happening because:

- The evidence varies from place to place and some of it conflicts with what is expected from past examples;
- Scientists can't use every available fact - they have to decide what is relevant and what is reliable;
- They have to use reports from other scientists, but they may have been based on different questions and been written for a different purpose, which affects the evidence that was selected and the conclusions that were drawn.

No one expects the scientists to agree, because they have to use what has happened to try and estimate what is happening now and predict what will happen in the future. In effect, they analyse the past to find the **causes**, explain the **nature** and assess the **significance** of what is happening now, in order to predict the future. Historians don't have to predict the future, but they do face similar problems in trying to understand what was really going on in the past.

For this reason it can be said that all historical accounts and explanations should be treated as **conditional** and open to challenge and reinterpretation.

Historians have had to use evidence that requires interpretation, select what is relevant according to the particular purpose of their study, draw inferences from what happened and make links between different parts of the situation, and then bring it all into an overall judgement. It is hardly surprising if they don't all do it in the same way. They use the same basic methodology, but they have different interests and ask different questions, which tends to produce different answers. On top of that, they are working from limited evidence that may well, in itself, require interpretation.

In studying history this is increased by the nature of the available evidence. The sources that exist are only a part of the evidence that existed at the time, and they are not tailor-made for the job that we expect them to do. There are gaps, obscure references, things that need to be explained from contextual knowledge, while secondary sources, the views of historians are simply that - historian's views, influenced by the time and context in which they were written. Historical sources do not provide information, but evidence from which the information can be inferred or deduced. To make sense of it, historians have to

use their judgement about what is meant, what is reliable, and how far it fits with what they know about the period. Sources have to be interpreted in context, and to do that historians have to use their own judgement. Where there is conflicting evidence the judgement is based on the overall balance. However, some evidence can be interpreted in different ways.

What this means for students is that you have to ask questions about the historians' accounts that you read, based on the process that you know they have used. Like scientists who study global warming, they are broadly in agreement about many issues, and differ only in some areas. This gives you a framework or context of knowledge about the period that will help you to **compare** different accounts, **evaluate** the conclusions against a body of evidence, **select** the parts that stand up to evaluation, and either **judge one account to be better** or **reconcile the best parts** of different accounts into your own, more balanced, conclusion.

What questions do you ask? In the light of what has been said above, try to formulate your own, then compare with the suggestions below.

In dealing with a single account:

- What evidence has been used to make this judgement? How reliable is it?
- Has any important evidence been ignored? Could any evidence reasonably be interpreted in a different way?
- What was the purpose of this account? How might that affect the questions asked, the selection of information and the conclusions that were drawn?

In comparing different accounts:

- Are the accounts conflicting, or merely different?
- How significant are the conflicts? Are they matters of substance, or of emphasis? Are there any areas of agreement?
- Can the conflicts be reconciled if the accounts are adjusted or refined? Would that lead to a better conclusion?
- If not, which account do I find more convincing - and would I like to adjust that a bit anyway?

This is the approach that you will need to take in part B of your Unit 3 examination, and it is worth practising for that reason alone, but it is also the way that historians study history. When they approach a period or a topic, they do not begin with contemporary sources. They go first to the historians accounts that have already been written, and by reading, analysing and comparing them they find out 'what happened', what do historians think was 'going on' and what areas raise questions, either because historians disagree, or because not enough is known about them. Then they can plan their own research, using contemporary evidence in the context of their wider knowledge, to test the views of different historians and develop their own conclusions. As you work through this Unit, you can do the same.

As you work through different accounts you can make a note of any aspects that are broadly agreed and accepted, and which aspects cause disagreement. For example, from the sources we have been examining which relate to the end of the Cold War, it is clear that Reagan's policies, Gorbachev's initiatives and popular uprisings each played a part in the end of the Cold War. There are disagreements about their relative importance and a key area of disagreement relates to Gorbachev's role - 'how crucial', 'how essential' etc.

For the controversy you are studying, you can summarise the key differences in a table similar to the one below which relates to the French Revolution.

Aspect of Controversy	Areas of agreement	Areas/Reasons for disagreement
B1 Why did constitutional monarchy fail in the years 1789-92?	Range of causes including role of the King, the onset of war, faction, religion.	Relative importance of causes eg the impact of war

Appendix 4

Student handout: Advice to students on Section B

The following guidance to students was produced by Richard Crunkhorn at Tupton Hall School, Derbyshire. This is not official Edexcel guidance and was not written by our senior examining team. We are sharing it with you as an example of a teacher designed resource and we would like to thank Richard for allowing us to share this guidance with others.

Year 13 Question 'B' Guidance

General Guidance

1. Read your mark scheme and remember you are being examined against 2 distinct criteria:
 - your ability to use and analyse sources. Remember this involves using your own knowledge
 - your ability to write a clear and well-structured answer which addresses the question.
2. Remember that your ability to evaluate interpretations is worth 24/ 40 marks.
3. Read the question carefully, remembering also to do this when writing your answer.
4. Read all the sources carefully before writing your answer, remembering the focus of the question.
5. Avoid simply copying information from the sources - **EVALUATE** it.
6. Avoid phrases such as 'as you can see Source . . . argues that . . .'
7. Don't feel that you have to use each source equally. Some sources may be more useful to you and therefore will be used more **BUT**, don't be overly reliant on one source and **DON'T** ignore any of the sources.

Specific Guidance

1. Start your work with a brief (about 5-9 lines) introduction which gives an overview of the main issues you are focusing on.
2. You will be given an interpretation in the question that you will be asked to evaluate. If the quotation is taken from one of the sources on the paper then begin with this source.
 - *It can be argued that . . . (issue in the question) is correct / is a valid argument / was the main cause of / did play a significant role in . . . as Source . . . states that . . .*
3. If the quotation is not taken from a source start with a source that agrees with the interpretation.
 - *Source . . . presents the argument that . . .*
 - *Source . . . supports the view / interpretation that . . .*
 - *Source . . . agrees with the view that . . .*
4. Evaluate the interpretation in the question using your knowledge. Use this knowledge to explain why that interpretation has some strengths. If you know any historians who support this view than refer to them by name, if you don't then don't.
 - *The argument that . . . was responsible for (issue in the question) can be supported by the fact that . . .*
 - *The argument that (statement in the question) . . . certainly has strengths as . . .*
 - *The statement / view that . . . (statement in the question) . . . led to / resulted in connects with . . .*
 - *There is certainly evidence to support the view that . . . for example . . .*
 - *Source or historian who wrote the sources argues that . . .*
 - *This view / interpretation is / can be supported by the fact that . . .*
5. Remember to use **SPECIFIC** information including relevant statistics in your evaluation and use more than one piece of evidence.
6. As you evaluate this source look for opportunities to bring in other sources. If you can find another source that agrees then remember to cross-reference.
 - *As Source . . . supports . . .*
 - *This argument is supported by Source / historian's name who wrote the source . . . which states . . .*
 - *The fact that (quotation from another source) further supports this view as / the view that . . .*
 - *Source . . . supports this view / interpretation as it states / argues . . .*

7. Now move onto other sources / sections from the sources that present a different interpretation
 - *Another view put forward in Source . . . is that . . .*
 - *Another factor that contributed to . . .*
 - *This is contradicted by Source . . . which states that / puts the view across that / argues that / points out that . . .*
 - *However Source / historian who wrote the source . . . states that / argues that / puts the view across that / points out that . . .*
 - *There is however certainly evidence to support the view argued by Source . . . / historian who wrote Source . . . that*
 - *A contradictory view is contained in Source . . . which argues that*
8. Don't forget that this cross-referencing also requires **SPECIFIC** knowledge to develop the points the source makes.
9. Conclude your work by answering the question.