



A-level HISTORY 7042/1H

Component 1H Tsarist and Communist Russia, 1855–1964

Mark scheme

June 2023

Version: 1.0 Final



2 3 6 A 7 0 4 2 / 1 H / M S

Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

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Level of response marking instructions

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the average performance for the level. There are marks in each level.

Before you apply the mark scheme to a student's answer read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. You can then apply the mark scheme.

Step 1 Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level. The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity, you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level, you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, ie if the response is predominantly Level 3 with a small amount of Level 4 material it would be placed in Level 3 but be awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the Level 4 content.

Step 2 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help. There will be an answer in the standardising materials which will correspond with each level of the mark scheme. This answer will have been awarded a mark by the Lead Examiner. You can compare the student's answer with the example to determine if it is the same standard, better or worse than the example. You can then use this to allocate a mark for the answer based on the Lead Examiner's mark on the example.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other valid points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the Indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.

Section A

- 0 1** Using your understanding of the historical context, assess how convincing the arguments in these three extracts are in relation to the reasons for the abdication of Tsar Nicholas II.

[30 marks]*Target: A03*

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

Generic Mark Scheme

- L5:** Shows a very good understanding of the interpretations put forward in all three extracts and combines this with a strong awareness of the historical context to analyse and evaluate the interpretations given in the extracts. Evaluation of the arguments will be well-supported and convincing. The response demonstrates a very good understanding of context. **25–30**
- L4:** Shows a good understanding of the interpretations given in all three extracts and combines this with knowledge of the historical context to analyse and evaluate the interpretations given in the extracts. The evaluation of the arguments will be mostly well-supported, and convincing, but may have minor limitations of depth and breadth. The response demonstrates a good understanding of context. **19–24**
- L3:** Provides some supported comment on the interpretations given in all three extracts and comments on the strength of these arguments in relation to their historical context. There is some analysis and evaluation but there may be an imbalance in the degree and depth of comments offered on the strength of the arguments. The response demonstrates an understanding of context. **13–18**
- L2:** Provides some accurate comment on the interpretations given in at least two of the extracts, with reference to the historical context. The answer may contain some analysis, but there is little, if any, evaluation. Some of the comments on the strength of the arguments may contain some generalisation, inaccuracy or irrelevance. The response demonstrates some understanding of context. **7–12**
- L1:** **Either** shows an accurate understanding of the interpretation given in one extract only **or** addresses two/three extracts, but in a generalist way, showing limited accurate understanding of the arguments they contain, although there may be some general awareness of the historical context. Any comments on the strength of the arguments are likely to be generalist and contain some inaccuracy and/or irrelevance. The response demonstrates limited understanding of context. **1–6**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.

Students must assess the extent to which the interpretations are convincing by drawing on contextual knowledge to corroborate and challenge the interpretation/arguments/views.

In their identification of the argument in Extract A, students may refer to the following:

- the overall argument is that the abdication of Tsar Nicholas II (and destruction of the Romanov dynasty) was caused by the Great War
- there had been significant strains and tensions in Russian society before 1917 – stemming from the industrialisation of the 1890s and the Tsar's limited response. Change, in 1905, temporarily addressed problems but did not solve them
- before 1914 there was no revolutionary threat as opposition forces were disunited
- the Great War intensified political and social stresses and so brought the abdication of the Tsar.

In their assessment of the extent to which the arguments are convincing, students may refer to the following:

- the importance of the war can be corroborated by reference to: (i) political problems-clashes with the Zemstva, the Progressive Bloc and (ii) economic and social problems – military failure and low morale, requisitioning, inflation, blockades and problems of supplies at home
- evidence that pre-1914 problems were covered over, not solved, can be corroborated by evidence of Russia's industrial growth and associated social dislocation; the Tsar's reluctance to concede change; the limitations of Duma government (fundamental laws; electoral manipulation)
- the absence of any revolutionary threat before 1914 could be linked to the weaknesses of opposition – exile, limited numbers and police curbs; submissive Dumas; continued support for Tsar shown in 1913 celebrations and at outbreak of war
- in challenging the argument, the likelihood of revolution before the war, wrought by the limited political change, social pressures from town and country and the existence of opposition forces displayed in increased strike activity could be cited.

In their identification of the argument in Extract B, students may refer to the following:

- the overall argument is that the Tsar's abdication was the result of sudden/spontaneous action by workers and soldiers in 1917
- although socialists had been working for revolution and the end of Tsardom since the 1890s, they did not foresee or lead the revolution
- pressure grew out of the strike movement of workers, women and young people, in Petrograd in February 1917, which was catalysed by the action of the soldiers
- the almost-bloodless revolution/abdication was brought about 'from below' on a Tsar who had not felt particularly threatened and who, until the very end, had the support of many Duma members.

In their assessment of the extent to which the arguments are convincing, students may refer to the following:

- the argument can be corroborated by reference to the activity in Petrograd in February/March 1917 – the strikes, the women’s march and the mutinies – and the absence of ‘leaders’; the crucial action of the soldiers can be corroborated with reference to the mutiny and support of Army High Command for the Duma’s provisional Committee. It was the military which diverted Nicholas’ returning train, allowing Duma representatives to force his abdication
- the weakness of the socialist opposition can be confirmed by reference to the exile of leaders, ideological disagreements, the rivalry between the SR/SDs and the split within the SDs, the effectiveness of the secret police, organisational difficulties, lack of finance, shortage of printing presses
- the Tsar’s vulnerability can be linked to his decision to remain at the front, his letters to his wife and correspondence with Rodzianko; his lack of action helps explain the change of attitude in the Duma
- in challenging the argument, the spontaneity of the 1917 demonstrations can be questioned; the problems of Tsardom and the work of opposition forces both before 1914 and during the war may be cited as having a greater impact on the abdication.

In their identification of the argument in Extract C, students may refer to the following:

- the overall argument is that Nicholas II brought about his own downfall; his abdication was the result of his own personal weaknesses and lack of talent
- from the beginning of his reign, Nicholas showed a lack of understanding of the political situation; he tried to prevent political change; he blamed others for troubles; he believed he knew best; he tried to curb the powers of the Duma
- although Nicholas worked conscientiously, he caused near paralysis in government and chose to lead his troops in 1915 to escape the pressures
- his move to the front in 1915 was fatal and led directly to his abdication in 1917.

In their assessment of the extent to which the arguments are convincing, students may refer to the following:

- the argument can be corroborated with reference to Nicholas II’s personality traits, his dismissal of talented ministers, eg Witte, the influence of family affairs and of Rasputin
- evidence can be cited of Nicholas’ reluctance to allow change, particularly with reference to 1904/5, his reassertion of autocracy in the fundamental laws and his subsequent response to the State Dumas
- the Tsar’s responses in wartime, both before and after 1915, can be cited as evidence of his limited understanding; he lacked the military experience needed for his move to become Commander-in-Chief to have meaning and he foolishly distanced himself from events in the capital; his readiness to abdicate confirmed his lack of comprehension
- in challenging the argument, it could be alleged that autocracy as a political system was incompatible with the changed economic society in Russia and that the abdication was only symbolic of a collapse that was bound to occur at some point. Nicholas had actually managed to rule for 18 years, so could not have been entirely incompetent.

Section B

0 2 'Alexander II's attempts at reform, in the years 1855 to 1881, were half-hearted and ineffective.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

Target: AO1

Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.

Generic Mark Scheme

- L5:** Answers will display a very good understanding of the full demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively delivered. The supporting information will be well-selected, specific and precise. It will show a very good understanding of key features, issues and concepts. The answer will be fully analytical with a balanced argument and well-substantiated judgement. **21–25**
- L4:** Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. It will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment relating to the question. The answer will be well-balanced with some judgement, which may, however, be only partially substantiated. **16–20**
- L3:** Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information, which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features, but may, however, be unspecific or lack precision of detail. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be a good deal of comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance, but a number of statements may be inadequately supported and generalist. **11–15**
- L2:** The answer is descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way, although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. **6–10**
- L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1–5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.

Arguments supporting the view that Alexander II's attempts at reform, in the years 1855 to 1881, were half-hearted and ineffective might include:

- Alexander's 'half-heartedness' can be linked to his fear of alienating the nobility and the Church: a fettered emancipation with redemption dues, temporary obligation and an unfair land redistribution; aristocratic officers retained despite military reforms, provincial governors continued to overrule zemstva; Church control over education only removed temporarily and soon restored with limited Church reform
- Alexander's 'half-heartedness' was due to his determination to maintain autocracy – particularly seen in his counter-reforms: he was fearful of pushing reforms too far and when he feared he had done so, he retracted them – as in the case of censorship, education; judiciary reforms also half-hearted as political crimes exempt from new procedures and police strengthened in Alexander II's later years
- Alexander's 'ineffectiveness' seen in the emancipation of serfs, where redemption dues and the influence of the mir limited mobility and ensured the continuance of traditional subsistence farming; in military reform where the wealthy evaded conscription and the arrangements for the zemstva with limited voting and where authority was undermined by a lack of taxation powers
- overall the reforms were half-hearted and ineffective because there was no change to the political system and the personnel of government; reforms for ethnic minorities were limited in scope and abandoned in case of Poles after 1863.

Arguments challenging the view that Alexander II's attempts at reform, in the years 1855 to 1881, were half-hearted and ineffective might include:

- Alexander was deeply committed to reform/not half-hearted (through his upbringing and family influences); he was bold enough to tackle the serf issue despite the opposition of landowners; only proceeded carefully through fear of instability
- following defeat in the Crimea, Alexander put all his energies into strengthening Russia; produced whole package of beneficial reforms – all containing 'effective' liberal elements which were built on in the future: emancipation of serfs; military reform; local government reform; judiciary reforms; educational reform; he even tackled constitutional change in the Loris-Melikov proposals
- Alexander II's reforms effectively changed the composition of Russian society: created free peasants and the beginnings of kulak class; allowed more mobility for the creation of an industrial workforce; transformed the army with conscription for all classes and better treatment; provided for the involvement and growth of 'professional classes' in government, taking first steps towards a more democratic framework and improving public services; established a single system of courts, open hearings, juries, equality before the law and expanded educational provision
- despite their limitations, the reforms effectively set Russia on a path towards modernisation and (unintentionally but a mark of their effectiveness) left the autocracy vulnerable to further change.

A case could be made in favour of the quotation by emphasising that there was a good deal of continuity to 1881 and that the scope of most of the reforms was limited by Alexander II's outlook and fears. Nevertheless, given the circumstances in which the Tsar was operating and the changes the reforms wrought to a long-established political and social system, it would seem unfair to agree entirely. Students are therefore most likely to argue that the reforms were not intentionally half-hearted and that they were all effective to varying degrees. Students may address 'half-hearted' and 'ineffective' separately or as a single concept. The former is likely to produce a more nuanced answer, but assess according to the generic mark scheme and reward any well-developed and well-supported response whether for or against the given view.

0 3 'Lenin's and Stalin's agricultural policies, in the years 1917 to 1941, were an economic success but a social failure.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

Target: AO1

Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.

Generic Mark Scheme

- L5:** Answers will display a very good understanding of the full demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively delivered. The supporting information will be well-selected, specific and precise. It will show a very good understanding of key features, issues and concepts. The answer will be fully analytical with a balanced argument and well-substantiated judgement. **21–25**
- L4:** Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. It will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment relating to the question. The answer will be well-balanced with some judgement, which may, however, be only partially substantiated. **16–20**
- L3:** Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information, which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features, but may, however, be unspecific or lack precision of detail. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be a good deal of comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance, but a number of statements may be inadequately supported and generalist. **11–15**
- L2:** The answer is descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way, although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. **6–10**
- L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1–5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.

Arguments supporting the view that Lenin’s and Stalin’s agricultural policies, in the years 1917 to 1941, were an economic success but a social failure:

- Lenin’s NEP (lasting until 1927) restarted the economy after less-successful years of adjustment 1917–1921, so may be deemed an economic success; nevertheless, by permitting capitalist kulaks, it was a social failure in Bolshevik terms; Lenin’s policies also provoked peasant uprisings 1920–21
- Stalin’s collectivisation was launched to support rapid industrialisation and was an economic success insofar as this aim was achieved – with workers adequately fed and capital created for industry through grain exports
- collectivisation made farming more efficient, allowed for more mechanisation on large consolidated farms (eg tractor stations) and facilitated ease of grain collection – all necessary for economic success
- socially, collectivisation was resisted: the programme had to be slowed in 1930 because of peasant hostility; dekulakisation removed successful farmers and caused mayhem in countryside; there was famine 1932–33 with deaths of millions of peasants.

Arguments challenging the view that Lenin’s and Stalin’s agricultural policies, in the years 1917 to 1941, were an economic success but a social failure:

- none of Lenin’s agricultural policies was particularly successful and by 1927 peasants were still not producing sufficient grain for export; under State Capitalism production decreased; under War Communism, peasants hid crops and sowed less grain culminating in widespread famine 1921
- Lenin had some social success: under State Capitalism the peasants’ possession of the land was acknowledged and under NEP peasants’ lives were improved when requisitioning was ended and they were again able to sell their surplus grain
- Stalin’s collectivisation had an economic downside: brought destruction of grain and livestock in early stages; removed peasant incentives; grain output didn’t exceed pre-collectivisation levels until after 1935
- Stalin’s collectivisation could be seen to have social benefits: it ‘socialised’ the peasants making them equal with town workers; social support was extended – including healthcare, childcare, education and legal protection; peasants received more education; greater social control by state.

Most students are likely to agree that agricultural policies were an economic success as agriculture provided the support needed for the transformation of Russia into a highly industrialised nation and would underpin Soviet victory in the Great Patriotic War. However, the extent of agricultural success could be questioned with reference to problems of grain production and the inefficient central planning system. The social effects of agricultural change are less easy to quantify. In terms of the promotion of a socialist society, they were not a disaster and communist control in the countryside was strengthened. However, in terms of quality of life, agricultural workers remained poor and over-worked (and kulaks wiped out), with low living standards, restricted freedom of movement and disruption to normal ‘family life’. Reward any well-balanced response.

- 0 4** In the years 1945 to 1964, to what extent was internal opposition to both Stalin and Khrushchev a threat to their authority?

[25 marks]

Target: AO1

Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.

Generic Mark Scheme

- L5:** Answers will display a very good understanding of the full demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively delivered. The supporting information will be well-selected, specific and precise. It will show a very good understanding of key features, issues and concepts. The answer will be fully analytical with a balanced argument and well-substantiated judgement. **21–25**
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- L2:** The answer is descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way, although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. **6–10**
- L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1–5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.

Arguments supporting the view that, in the years 1945 to 1964, internal opposition to both Stalin and Khrushchev was a threat to their authority:

- individuals and groups challenged Stalin's authority on political/ideological grounds. Pro-westerners were found among elites, eg Beria and followers (seen as personal danger) and among ordinary citizens; although less influential, the large numbers of returning soldiers and POWs meant Stalin felt threatened; opposition of the successful and ambitious who commanded personal followings was feared, eg Zhukov (military officer), Malenkov, Zhdanov (party men) and the independent Party clique in Leningrad
- political opposition threatened Khrushchev, protracting his bid for power over 4 years and forcing him to take action to eliminate opposition of Beria (1953); he had to win over party support to outbid Malenkov and the 'anti-Party' group (1955–57); he remained insecure until 1958 with action against Zhukov (57) and Bulganin (58); by 1964 opposition (Brezhnev, Kosygin) was effective when Khrushchev was ousted – showing the threat to his authority posed by the continuance of hard-line pro-Stalinist sentiment
- Jews and ethnic minorities had reason to resent both Stalin's and Khrushchev's authority: Jews, suffering anti-Semitism and encouraged by formation of Israel were feared by Stalin (Doctors' plot); ethnic minorities that had been persecuted/deported in war provided a potential undercurrent for unrest throughout
- Khrushchev faced some illegal demonstrations, eg in Tbilisi, Georgia in violent outburst against de-Stalinisation in 1956; low living standards and social grievances also provided the potential for unrest
- cultural dissidents used arts to convey political messages; they were feared by Stalin (hence the Zhdanovshchina) and Khrushchev found them a difficult group to control as they evaded the law using tamizdat (publishing abroad), samizdat (publishing illegally at home) held poetry readings and spread illegal music; dissidents threatened the ideological purity the leaders sought to uphold and, in particular won support among young people.

Arguments challenging the view that, in the years 1945 to 1964, internal opposition to both Stalin and Khrushchev was a threat to their authority:

- there was virtually no overt opposition to Stalin apparent 1945–53, with demotion of Party autocracy and revival of terror under High Stalinism
- Stalin's swift and pre-emptive action destroyed all 'potential opposition' – NKVD and use of gulags with internment of returning soldiers from West, Leningrad case, anti-Semitic action, eg in forestalling 'Doctors' plot'; personality cult reinforced authority of ruler who could not be questioned
- Khrushchev defeated rivals for leadership of USSR and exerted influence through 1956 Secret Speech and in his second de-Stalinisation push of 1961, suggesting that hard-line opposition posed little threat to his authority before 1964
- whilst they had different approaches, both leaders controlled cultural matters, so avoiding any significant or widespread threat. Stalin imposed the Zhdanovshchina to ensure conformity; Khrushchev took action against extreme cultural dissidents using imprisonment/incarceration in asylums or exile
- political opponents/rivals were removed by Stalin and demoted and sent far from Moscow by Khrushchev; outright opposition was almost impossible among citizens because of powers of police state and therefore little threatened either leader's authority.

It is likely that students will argue that opposition posed a limited threat overall and, in the case of Stalin, was more imagined than real. Opposition certainly encroached on Khrushchev's authority, however, and it would be fair to argue that whilst opposition from outside the Party was easily controlled, that from within was more of a challenge. Stalin did not allow it to escalate and Khrushchev was able to deal with this successfully until 1964. However, ultimately he was threatened as political opponents forced his resignation. Some students might point out that the circumstances of the Soviet police state were such as to render any attempts at opposition futile. Nevertheless, a case could be made that opposition presented a constant threat to the leaders. Even Stalin sought out potential opponents and relied on strong action to prevent his authority being weakened.