

AQA – 2N Tsarist and Communist Russia 1917- 1953



Key Information from the Spec

Name:

Form:

2.3 A-level

A-level students must take assessments in all three of the following components in the same series:

- Component 1: Breadth study
- Component 2: Depth study
- Component 3: Historical investigation (Personal study)

Students must:

- study the history of more than one country
- study a British history option for Component 1 or 2
- study a non-British history option for Component 1 or 2
- study topics from a chronological range of at least 200 years

Assessments

Component 1: Breadth study

What's assessed

The study of significant historical developments over a period of around 100 years and associated interpretations.

Assessed

- written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes
- three questions (one compulsory)
- 80 marks
- 40% of A-level

Questions

- two sections
- Section A – one compulsory question linked to historical interpretations (30 marks)
- Section B – two from three essays (2 x 25 marks)



Component 2: Depth study

What's assessed

The study in depth of a period of major historical change or development and associated primary evidence.

Assessed

- written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes
- three questions (one compulsory)
- 80 marks
- 40% of A-level

Questions

- two sections
- Section A – one compulsory question linked to primary sources or sources contemporary to the period (30 marks)
- Section B – two from three essays (2 x 25 marks)



Component 3: Historical investigation

What's assessed

A personal study based on a topic of student's choice. This should take the form of a question in the context of approximately 100 years. It must not duplicate the content of options chosen for Components 1 and 2.

Assessed

- 3500–4500 words
- 40 marks
- 20% of A-level
- marked by teachers
- moderated by AQA

- Through the topics studied in Components 1, 2 and 3 (Historical investigation), A-level students must cover a chronological range of at least 200 years.

Prohibited Combinations

Students must study a British history option for either Component 1 or Component 2. If a British history option is chosen for Component 1, it must be combined with a non-British option for Component 2. If a British history option is chosen for Component 2, it must be combined with a non-British option for Component 1. Any British option may be combined with any non-British option, other than the following:

- 1C The Tudors may not be combined with 2C The Reformation in Europe
- 1D Stuart Britain and the Crisis of Monarchy may not be combined with 2F The Sun King: Louis XIV, France and Europe

2N Revolution and dictatorship: Russia, 1917–1953

This option provides for the study in depth of the coming and practice of communism in Russia. It explores concepts such as Marxism, communism, Leninism, and Stalinism, ideological control and dictatorship. It also enables students to consider issues of political authority, the power of individuals and the inter-relationship of governmental and economic and social change.

Part one: The Russian Revolution and the Rise of Stalin, 1917–1929

Dissent and Revolution, 1917

- The condition of Russia before the revolution of February/March 1917: the Tsar and political authority; the war effort; the economic and social state of Russia; discontent
- The February/March revolution of 1917: causes and course of revolution; issues of leadership and the Tsar's abdication; the establishment of Provisional Government and the Petrograd Soviet; the workings of the Dual authority
- Developments between the revolutions including: the return of Lenin; Lenin's ideology and the April Theses; the July Days; the Kornilov coup and the roles of both the Provisional Government and Trotsky; Lenin and the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party
- The October/November 1917 revolution: causes, course and extent of revolution; leadership and the establishment of Bolshevik authority; Sovnarkom and decrees and actions to December

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Bolshevik consolidation, 1918–1924

- The consolidation of the Communist dictatorship: the establishment of one-party control; the removal of the Constituent Assembly; the ending of involvement in the First World War
- The Civil War: causes and course; the role of Trotsky; the murder of the Tsar; the reasons for the Red victory; government and control in wartime
- Economic and social developments: state capitalism; social change; conditions in cities and countryside during the Civil War; war communism; the Red Terror: revolts of 1920–1921 including the Tambov revolt and Kronstadt rising; the NEP and its political and economic impact
- Foreign relations and attitudes of foreign powers: foreign intervention in the Civil War; Comintern; the Russo-Polish War; discussions leading to the Rapallo Treaty; official recognition and the repercussions of the 'Zinoviev letter'; Lenin's rule by 1924

Stalin's rise to power, 1924–1929

- The power vacuum and power struggle: ideology and the nature of leadership; Lenin's testament; divisions and contenders for power: character, strengths and weaknesses of Stalin, Trotsky, Bukharin, Kamenev, Rykov, Tomsky and Zinoviev
- Ideological debates and issues in the leadership struggle: NEP and industrialisation; 'permanent revolution' versus 'Socialism in One Country'; how and why Stalin became party leader and the outcome for the other contenders
- Economic developments: reasons for and impact of the 'Great Turn'; the economic shift; the launch of the first Five Year Plan and the decision to collectivise
- Government, propaganda and the beginning of the Stalinist cult; Stalin's attitude to foreign powers: China; Germany and the Treaty of Berlin; changes in the Comintern

Part two: Stalin's Rule, 1929–1953 (A-level only)

Economy and society, 1929–1941 (A-level only)

- Agricultural and social developments in the countryside: voluntary and forced collectivisation; state farms; mechanisation; the impact of collectivisation on the kulaks and other peasants; the famine of 1932–1934; the success of collectivisation
- Industrial and social developments in towns and cities: Gosplan; the organisation, aims and results of the first three Five Year Plans; new industrial centres and projects; the involvement of foreign companies; the working and living conditions of managers, workers and women; Stakhanovites; the success of the Five Year Plans
- The development of the Stalin cult: literature, the arts and other propaganda; Socialist Realism
- The social and economic condition of the Soviet Union by 1941: strengths and weaknesses

Stalinism, politics and control, 1929–1941 (A-level only)

- Dictatorship and Stalinism: the machinery of state terror; the NKVD; the early purges; Kirov's murder; the show trials; the Stalin constitution
- The Yezhovshchina: mass terror and repression at central and local levels; treatment of national minorities; the gulags; the end of the purges; the death of Trotsky; responsibility for and impact of the Terror and purges

- Culture and society: church; women, young people and working men; urban and rural differences; 'socialist man' and the impact of cultural change; similarities and differences between Lenin's and Stalin's USSR
- Stalin and international relations: co-operation with Germany; entry into the League of Nations; pacts with France and Czechoslovakia; intervention in the Spanish Civil War; reaction to Western appeasement and Japanese aggression; the Nazi-Soviet Pact and its outcome

The Great Patriotic War and Stalin's Dictatorship, 1941–1953 (A-level only)

- The impact of the war on the Soviet Union: Operation Barbarossa and the Stalinist reaction; the course of the war; the USSR under occupation and the fight-back; the Soviet economy; mobilisation and evacuation of industry; foreign aid
- The defeat of the Germans: reasons and results; post-war reconstruction; industry and agriculture
- High Stalinism: dictatorship and totalitarianism; renewed Terror; the NKVD under Beria; Zhdanovism and the cultural purge; Stalin's cult of personality; the Leningrad affair; purges and the Doctors' Plot
- The transformation of the Soviet Union's international position: the emergence of a 'superpower'; the formation of a soviet bloc; conflict with USA and the capitalist West; death of Stalin and Stalin's legacy at home and abroad

Section B

0 2 'From the revolution of October/November 1917 to the new constitution of July 1918, Lenin's only aim was to establish a one-party state.'

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**

Section A

- 0 1** With reference to these sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying the impact of Lenin’s New Economic Policy (NEP).

[30 marks]

Target: AO2

Analyse and evaluate appropriate source material, primary and/or contemporary to the period, within the historical context.

Generic Mark Scheme

- L5:** Shows a very good understanding of all three sources in relation to both content and provenance and combines this with a strong awareness of the historical context to present a balanced argument on their value for the particular purpose given in the question. The answer will convey a substantiated judgement. The response demonstrates a very good understanding of context. **25-30**
- L4:** Shows a good understanding of all three sources in relation to both content and provenance and combines this with an awareness of the historical context to provide a balanced argument on their value for the particular purpose given in the question. Judgements may, however, be partial or limited in substantiation. The response demonstrates a good understanding of context. **19-24**
- L3:** Shows some understanding of all three sources in relation to both content and provenance together with some awareness of the historical context. There may, however, be some imbalance in the degree of breadth and depth of comment offered on all three sources and the analysis may not be fully convincing. The answer will make some attempt to consider the value of the sources for the particular purpose given in the question. The response demonstrates an understanding of context. **13-18**
- L2:** The answer will be partial. It may, for example, provide some comment on the value of the sources for the particular purpose given in the question but only address one or two of the sources, or focus exclusively on content (or provenance), or it may consider all three sources but fail to address the value of the sources for the particular purpose given in the question. The response demonstrates some understanding of context. **7-12**
- L1:** The answer will offer some comment on the value of at least one source in relation to the purpose given in the question but the response will be limited and may be partially inaccurate. Comments are likely to be unsupported, vague or generalist. The response demonstrates limited understanding of context. **1-6**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Section B

Answer **two** questions.

- 0 2** 'From the revolution of October/November 1917 to the new constitution of July 1918, Lenin's only aim was to establish a one-party state.'
- Assess the validity of this view. **[25 marks]**
- 0 3** To what extent were the purges and terror of 1937–38 due to Stalin's determination to eliminate potential political rivals? **[25 marks]**
- 0 4** How successful were attempts to rebuild the Soviet economy in the years 1945 to 1953? **[25 marks]**

END OF QUESTIONS

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Source C

From 'Memoirs of a Revolutionary' by Victor Serge, published in 1951 after his death. Serge was a revolutionary Bolshevik, friend of Zinoviev and wrote when in exile under Stalin.

The New Economic Policy gave some impressive results, but the confusion among the party rank-and-file was staggering. 'For what did we fight?' asked civil war veterans bitterly. I saw that the transition to a period of economic freedom had been an immense and demoralising blunder. Business livens up society, but it was the most corrupt kind of business imaginable. Retail trade passed into the hands of private enterprise which triumphed over the cooperative and state trading systems. Where did the capital, non-existent five years ago, all come from? From robbery and fraudulent speculation. Middlemen doubled the price of everything. Soviet trade was controlled by a flock of vultures. In this respect, NEP was an unquestionable setback. One shabby little character named Plyatsky was at the hub of all corruption and speculation in Leningrad. He sold shares in companies by the dozen, bribed officials in every single department but was not shot because, basically, he was indispensable. The NEP became one big confidence-trick.

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With reference to these sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying the impact of Lenin's New Economic Policy (NEP).

[30 marks]

Turn over for Section B

Section AAnswer Question 01.

Source A

From an article entitled 'On Co-operation', written by Lenin and published in the official Bolshevik government newspaper, Pravda, in the early months of 1923.

We have overthrown the rule of the exploiters and political power is in the hands of the working class. We have also now found that degree of combination of private commercial interest and state supervision, which was formerly a stumbling block. The power of the state over all large-scale means of production, together with political power in the hands of the proletariat and proletarian leadership of the peasantry, is all that is necessary to build a complete socialist society. The only thing we have left to do is to make our people so enlightened that they understand the advantages of working together through the NEP. An educational revolution now confronts us. This will be sufficient to make our country a complete socialist country, but to achieve this we must achieve a certain development of the economy to give us a base. Our rule must be: as little debating and as few complications as possible. The NEP is an advance because it is adjustable.

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Source B

From a chapter on Moscow in 1923 in 'I Write as I Please', by Walter Duranty, 1935. Duranty was an American journalist based in Moscow in the 1920s.

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A-level HISTORY

Component 2N Revolution and dictatorship: Russia, 1917–1953

Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes

Materials

For this paper you must have:

- an AQA 16-page answer book.

Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Paper Reference** is 7042/2N.
- Answer **three** questions.
In **Section A** answer Question 01.
In **Section B** answer **two** questions.

Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 80.
- You will be marked on your ability to:
 - use good English
 - organise information clearly
 - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Advice

- You are advised to spend about:
 - 1 hour on Question 01 from **Section A**
 - 45 minutes on each of the **two** questions answered from **Section B**.