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AS

# History

Revolution and dictatorship: Russia, 1917–1953

Component 2N The Russian Revolution and the Rise of Stalin, 1917–1929

Mark scheme

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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 Assessment Writer.

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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**June 2017**

**Revolution and dictatorship: Russia, 1917–1953**

**AS History Component 2N The Russian Revolution and the Rise of Stalin, 1917–1929**

**Section A**

- 01** With reference to these sources and your understanding of the historical context, which of these two sources is more valuable in explaining the revolution of October/November 1917? **[25 marks]**

*Target: AO2*

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

**Generic Mark Scheme**

- L5:** Answers will display a very good understanding of the value of the sources in relation to the issue identified in the question. They will evaluate the sources thoroughly in order to provide a well-substantiated conclusion. The response demonstrates a very good understanding of context. **21-25**
- L4:** Answers will provide a range of relevant well-supported comments on the value of the sources for the issue identified in the question. There will be sufficient comment to provide a supported conclusion but not all comments will be well-substantiated, and judgements will be limited. The response demonstrates a good understanding of context. **16-20**
- L3:** The answer will provide some relevant comments on the value of the sources and there will be some explicit reference to the issue identified in the question. Judgements will however, be partial and/or thinly supported. The response demonstrates an understanding of context. **11-15**
- L2:** The answer will be partial. There may be either some relevant comments on the value of one source in relation to the issue identified in the question or some comment on both, but lacking depth and have little, if any, explicit link to the issue identified in the question. The response demonstrates some understanding of context. **6-10**
- L1:** The answer will either describe source content or offer stock phrases about the value of the source. There may be some comment on the issue identified in the question but it is likely to be limited, unsubstantiated and unconvincing. The response demonstrates limited understanding of context. **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.**

**Students must deploy knowledge of the historical context to show an understanding of the relationship between the sources and the issues raised in the question, when assessing the significance of provenance, the arguments deployed in the sources and the tone and emphasis of the sources. Descriptive answers which fail to do this should be awarded no more than Level 2 at best. Answers should address both the value and the limitations of the sources for the particular question and purpose given.**

In responding to this question, students may choose to address each source in turn or to adopt a more comparative approach in order to arrive at a judgement. Either approach is equally valid and what follows is indicative of the evaluation which may be relevant.

**Source A: in assessing the value of this source as an explanation, students may refer to the following:**

### Provenance and tone

- As leader of the Bolsheviks, Lenin would be a valuable source of information on the revolution. Lenin was writing for the eyes only of the Bolsheviks' Central Committee, and therefore just for the leading Party members, which would likely lead to an honest portrayal of the current situation
- Lenin's views in calling for a revolution were entirely consistent with everything he had said or written since April, since he had already been against cooperation with the Provisional Government
- the tone is one of enthusiasm and optimism for action and a plea for decisiveness. Lenin felt that the Bolsheviks were on the crest of a wave after recent events and must not pass up the chance of seizing power. However, it is also a persuasive letter, trying to sway the Committee to his way of thinking, suggesting that not everyone was on-side

### Content and argument

- Lenin argues that the Bolsheviks must seize the moment. The Bolsheviks had just helped to defeat the Kornilov revolt and party recruitment was rising rapidly. Also the Bolsheviks, having just got a majority in the Petrograd and Moscow soviets, could now act not just in their own name but that of the soviets generally, giving them even more credibility
- Lenin also wanted to act because German forces were dangerously near Petrograd and that if it were captured, the Bolsheviks would have much less chance to seize power. Better to take advantage of the power vacuum under the steadily weakening Provisional Government
- Lenin was also keen to act because he was optimistic that a forced revolution within Russia would help provoke the international revolution against warring governments which all Marxists longed for
- it was also an opportunity for Lenin to further discredit his political rivals on the Left, the Mensheviks and SRs, who were hesitant and increasingly harmed by their association with the floundering Provisional Government.

**Source B: in assessing the value of this source as an explanation, students may refer to the following:**

### **Provenance and tone**

- Kamenev and Zinoviev's letter was very different from Lenin's because they made it public in their concern to express their opposition to Lenin's call for immediate action. Their concern is genuine and so the source is valuable in giving the views of those Bolsheviks who opposed immediate action
- as leading Bolsheviks and old colleagues of Lenin, their views were important. They believed like Lenin in a socialist revolution – but doubted that the time was ripe. The tone is pessimistic because they did not believe that there were enough active supporters on the street to seize power, and defeat would be fatal for the Bolshevik's future chances
- the tone also reflects traditional Marxist philosophy that an international revolution was essential for the future of socialism, and the two men did not believe that a Bolshevik coup at this stage would promote this. It makes it valuable evidence for widely held Bolshevik views at the time.

### **Content and argument**

- the position of Kamenev and Zinoviev was credible. It was not certain in early October 1917 that the Bolsheviks could seize power and that the forces opposing them would be so weak. Lenin was in Finnish exile until his secret return to Petrograd for the crucial 10 October meeting. The letter, published in a non-Bolshevik daily paper, infuriated Lenin, since it publically revealed the planned revolt
- Kamenev and Zinoviev were not lone voices amongst the Marxists. The Central Committee had opposed Lenin's calls for a rising in September and October and also tried to suppress any attempt at revolt by workers or soldiers acting without its orders. Even when the Central Committee finally bowed to Lenin on 10 October, the Committee made no attempt to determine tactics. Trotsky did this later, and Kamenev and Zinoviev were not involved
- the strong disagreements between the sources reflect important ideological considerations. While Marx had not ruled out armed revolutions, the basic Marxist position had been that a socialist revolution would only occur in the fullness of time when a large industrial proletariat would prevail by sheer weight of numbers. Kamenev and Zinoviev argue that these numbers do not yet exist in October 1917
- it was Lenin who had emphasised the role of a small party of dedicated Marxist revolutionaries in leading a seizure of power in the name of the working classes, rather than wait for socialism to develop more slowly in a developed industrialised state.

In arriving at a judgement as to which source might be of greater value, students may conclude that both are valuable in helping to explain the events of autumn 1917. The sources show how views on revolution were determined by both beliefs and the uneasy state of Russia. Kamenev's and Zinoviev's views could not be ignored, because there were potential difficulties in any political grouping trying to take power at this time, but Lenin's significance was crucial. He had forced his views on the Bolsheviks since April 1917, but there were still Bolsheviks opposing his views. Any supported argument as to the relative value of the sources in explaining why the Revolution took place in October and in the way that it did should be credited.

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**Section B**

**02** ‘The Bolshevik consolidation of power by 1921 was due to the popularity of their policies.’

Explain why you agree or disagree with 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 good understanding of the demands of the question. They 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 leading to substantiated judgement. **21-25**
- L4:** 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. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be analytical comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance. However, there may be some generalisation and judgements will be limited and only partially substantiated. **16-20**
- L3:** The answer will show some understanding of the full demands of the question and the answer will be adequately organised. There will be appropriate information showing an understanding of some key features and/or issues but the answer may be limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some comment in relation to the question. **11-15**
- L2:** The answer will be 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**

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## 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 suggesting that the Bolshevik consolidation of power by 1921 was due to the popularity of their policies might include:**

- the ending of Russia's involvement in the First World War through the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was popular with many, despite the harsh peace, because the war had brought so much misery to Russia
- the Bolsheviks, at least initially, profited from considerable enthusiasm for promising to build a new and better society through 'Peace, Land, Bread'. For a time they were able to blame shortages and difficulties on the Civil War 'forced' on them by their opponents
- initial decrees enjoyed widespread popularity, with the Decree on Land legitimising the seizure of private land by the peasants and the Workers' Decree improving workers' rights through changes like the shortening of the working day
- the abandoning of the unpopular War Communism in 1921, which had caused economic strife and mass unrest, led to the introduction of the popular NEP which allowed for the selling of surplus grain and private trade

**Arguments challenging the view that the Bolshevik consolidation of power by 1921 was due to the popularity of their policies might include:**

- policies were not necessarily popular; factory and land owners were frustrated by the decrees, reductions in bread rationing caused worker unrest, War Communism caused incessant rebellion from the peasants and many balked at the harsh terms of Brest-Litovsk
- victory in the Civil War was essential in consolidating power. This was achieved thanks to the more effective leadership and geographical advantages of the Reds, alongside the fact that the Whites were eventually abandoned by their foreign allies
- force was also widely used to eliminate any threats. The growth of the Red Terror and use of mass executions by the Cheka kept the Bolsheviks in power through fear and the confinement of class enemies in concentration camps helped remove opposition
- the Bolsheviks quickly established a one-party state, dissolving the Constituent Assembly and using censorship to quieten their enemies; opposition papers were banned and Bolshevik propaganda became increasingly widespread.

In conclusion, students are likely to argue that it was a combination of Bolshevik policies, their use of force, victory in the Civil War and establishment of a one-party state which enabled them to consolidate their power. Weight can be given to particular factors, or there can be a very balanced response, as long as the case is argued.

- 03** ‘Soviet foreign policy in the 1920s was successful in strengthening Russia’s international security.’

Explain why you agree or disagree with 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 good understanding of the demands of the question. They 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 leading to substantiated judgement. **21-25**
- L4:** 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. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be analytical comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance. However, there may be some generalisation and judgements will be limited and only partially substantiated. **16-20**
- L3:** The answer will show some understanding of the full demands of the question and the answer will be adequately organised. There will be appropriate information showing an understanding of some key features and/or issues but the answer may be limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some comment in relation to the question. **11-15**
- L2:** The answer will be 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**



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## 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 suggesting that Soviet foreign policy in the 1920s was successful in strengthening Russia's international security might include:**

- Soviet politicians did not abandon their fear of capitalist powers or their commitment to the eventual triumph of socialism in the world, but they also recognised the desirability of better relations and trade links, and were therefore open to negotiations
- Russia's isolation amongst the great powers after the Revolution and Civil War was ended by the 1922 Treaty of Rapallo, signed with Germany, which provided for diplomatic relations, mutual trade and military cooperation. Relations with Germany were consolidated by the 1926 Treaty of Berlin
- diplomatic relations were established with smaller countries, for example the Baltic States in 1920 and Finland, which helped to provide Soviet Russia with new allies
- the Soviets made a trade treaty with Britain in 1921. France, Britain and some other countries recognised the USSR in 1924, and Japan did in 1925, finally evacuating Eastern Siberia.

**Arguments challenging the view that Soviet foreign policy in the 1920s was successful in strengthening Russia's international security might include:**

- because of the Comintern, established in 1921, foreign governments remained very suspicious of close links with the USSR because of its policy of fomenting revolution in their own countries. This suspicion did not help Russia's security
- Soviet policy was regarded by other powers as ambiguous, or at worst deceitful, because of the parallel search by the USSR for security and revolutionary change – not calculated to increase any country's sense of security
- the Conservative government in Britain became increasingly suspicious of Soviet Russia's aims, particularly after suspected interference in the General Strike through the sending of money to the TUC. This was followed by a break in diplomatic relations in 1927
- Soviet foreign policy in the Far East did not increase Russian security. By appearing to back both the Chinese Nationalists and Communists, Stalin badly misjudged things, contributing to the massacre of Chinese Communists and a war scare.

In conclusion, students may well write a balanced answer which explains that the Bolsheviks had some foreign policy successes in the 1920s, but also felt with some justification that their international position was still not secure; or students may give the emphasis to one side of the argument rather than the other. The important thing is that any argument should be supported.