GCE

History A

Y249/01: Non-British period study: Russia 1894-1941

AS Level

Mark Scheme for June 2025

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This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and students, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which marks were awarded by examiners. It does not indicate the details of the discussions which took place at an examiners' meeting before marking commenced.

All examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and the report on the examination.

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MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

PREPARATION FOR MARKING
RM ASSESSOR

1. Make sure that you have accessed and completed the relevant training packages for on-screen marking: *RM Assessor Online Training: OCR Essential Guide to Marking*.

2. Make sure that you have read and understood the mark scheme and the question paper for this unit. These are available in RM Assessor

3. Log-in to RM Assessor and mark the **required number** of practice responses ("scripts") and the **required number** of standardisation responses.

MARKING

1. Mark strictly to the mark scheme.

2. Marks awarded must relate directly to the marking criteria.

3. The schedule of dates is very important. It is essential that you meet the RM Assessor 50% and 100% (traditional 40% Batch 1 and 100% Batch 2) deadlines. If you experience problems, you must contact your Team Leader (Supervisor) without delay.

4. If you are in any doubt about applying the mark scheme, consult your Team Leader by telephone or the RM Assessor messaging system, or by email.

5. **Crossed Out Responses**
   Where a candidate has crossed out a response and provided a clear alternative then the crossed out response is not marked. Where no alternative response has been provided, examiners may give candidates the benefit of the doubt and mark the crossed out response where legible.

   Rubric Error Responses – Optional Questions
   Where candidates have a choice of question across a whole paper or a whole section and have provided more answers than required, then all responses are marked and the highest mark allowable within the rubric is given. Enter a mark for each question answered into RM assessor, which will select the highest mark from those awarded. *(The underlying assumption is that the candidate has penalised themselves by attempting more questions than necessary in the time allowed.)*

Multiple Choice Question Responses

When a multiple choice question has only a single, correct response and a candidate provides two responses (even if one of these responses is correct), then no mark should be awarded (as it is not possible to determine which was the first response selected by the candidate).

When a question requires candidates to select more than one option/multiple options, then local marking arrangements need to ensure consistency of approach.

Contradictory Responses

When a candidate provides contradictory responses, then no mark should be awarded, even if one of the answers is correct.

Short Answer Questions (requiring only a list by way of a response, usually worth only **one mark per response**)

Where candidates are required to provide a set number of short answer responses then only the set number of responses should be marked. The response space should be marked from left to right on each line and then line by line until the required number of responses have been considered. The remaining responses should not then be marked. Examiners will have to apply judgement as to whether a 'second response' on a line is a development of the 'first response', rather than a separate, discrete response. *(The underlying assumption is that the candidate is attempting to hedge their bets and therefore getting undue benefit rather than engaging with the question and giving the most relevant/correct responses.)*

Short Answer Questions (requiring a more developed response, worth **two or more marks**)

If the candidates are required to provide a description of, say, three items or factors and four items or factors are provided, then mark on a similar basis – that is downwards (as it is unlikely in this situation that a candidate will provide more than one response in each section of the response space.)

Longer Answer Questions (requiring a developed response)

Where candidates have provided two (or more) responses to a medium or high tariff question which only required a single (developed) response and not crossed out the first response, then only the first response should be marked. Examiners will need to apply professional judgement as to whether the second (or a subsequent) response is a 'new start' or simply a poorly expressed continuation of the first response.

6. Always check the pages (and additional objects if present) at the end of the response in case any answers have been continued there. If the candidate has continued an answer there, then add a tick to confirm that the work has been seen.

7. There is a NR (**No Response**) option. Award NR (No Response):

   - if there is nothing written at all in the answer space
   - OR if there is a comment which does not in any way relate to the question (e.g., 'can't do', 'don't know')
   - OR if there is a mark (e.g., a dash, a question mark) which is not an attempt at the question.

   Note: Award 0 marks – for an attempt that earns no credit (including copying out the question).

8. The RM Assessor **comments box** is used by your team leader to explain the marking of the practice responses. Please refer to these comments when checking your practice responses. **Do not use the comments box for any other reason.**

9. *Assistant Examiners will send a brief report on the performance of candidates to their Team Leader (Supervisor) via email by the end of the marking period. The report should contain notes on particular strengths displayed as well as common errors or weaknesses. Constructive criticism of the question paper/mark scheme is also appreciated.*

10. For answers marked by levels of response: Not applicable in F501
    a. **To determine the level** – start at the highest level and work down until you reach the level that matches the answer
    b. **To determine the mark within the level**, consider the following

Descriptor	Award mark
On the borderline of this level and the one below	At bottom of level
Just enough achievement on balance for this level	Above bottom and either below middle or at middle of level (depending on number of marks available)
Meets the criteria but with some slight inconsistency	Above middle and either below top of level or at middle of level (depending on number of marks available)
Consistently meets the criteria for this level	At top of level

11. **Annotations**

Annotation	Meaning
BP	Blank Page
	Highlight
Off-page comment	
A	Assertion
AN	Analysis
EVAL	Evaluation
EXP	Explanation
F	Factor
ILL	Illustrates/Describes
IRRL	Irrelevant, a significant amount of material that does not answer the question
J	Judgement
KU	Knowledge and understanding
P	Provenance
SC	Simple comment
	Unclear
V	View

Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
1			**To what extent did the Russian economy improve in the period from 1894 to the outbreak of war in 1914?** **In arguing that the Russian economy did improve**, • Answers might consider that under Witte industrial growth improved by around 8% per year, improving the economy. • Answers might consider Witte's expansion of the rail network and improving infrastructure. • Answers might consider benefits of Witte's fiscal policy (e.g., tariffs, loans from abroad); • Answers might consider the value of Stolypin's long-termism 'wager on the strong' approach. • Answers might consider the value of Stolypin promoting alternatives to the mir structure. • Answers might consider the significant increase in grain production from the late 1900s. In arguing that **the Russian economy did not improve**, • Answers might consider that Witte was denied the opportunity to reform the mir and grain production stagnated in the early 1900s. • Answers might consider the increased burden of indirect taxation on the peasantry and poor conditions for workers, due to Witte's policies. • Answers might consider Witte's over-reliance on foreign loans and investments.	30	The indicative content lists features of the period studied that relate to the question set. **Neither significance nor relative importance are attributed to the features listed.** The indicative content is intended to reflect the knowledge and understanding a candidate is likely to analyse and evaluate in order to arrive at a judgement in line with the question set. • No set answer is expected. • At Level 5 there will be a judgement as to the extent of improvement. • At Level 5 answers might establish criteria against which to judge the relative improvement. • To be valid, judgements must be supported by relevant and accurate material. If not, they are assertions. • Knowledge must not be credited in isolation, it should only be credited where it is used as the basis for analysis and evaluation, in line with descriptions in the mark scheme.

Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
			• Answers might consider continuing and worsening economic conditions facing millions of ordinary Russians. • Answers might consider that Stolypin introduced few measures to continue to grow Russian industry past those of Witte. • Answers might consider that most Russian agriculture remained primitive in 1914 and most peasants remained tied to the mir.		

Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
2*			**'The use of terror was the most important reason for the Bolsheviks increasing their control of Russia during the period from 1918 to Lenin's death in 1924.'** **How far do you agree?** **In arguing that the use of terror was the most important reason for the Bolsheviks increasing their control of Russia,** • Answers might consider the persecution of other left-wing groups such as the Mensheviks and Populists after the Constituent Assembly was closed. • Answers might consider the impact of the 'Red Terror' and Cheka in eliminating opposition.	30	The indicative content lists features of the period studied that relate to the question set. Both features that support the hypothesis and features that challenge the hypothesis are detailed. **Neither significance nor relative importance are attributed to the features listed.** The indicative content is intended to reflect the knowledge and understanding a candidate is likely to analyse and evaluate in order to arrive at a judgement in line with the question set. • No set answer is expected. • At Level 5 there will be a judgement as to the relative importance of factors. • At Level 5 answers might establish criteria against which to judge the extent of control. • To be valid, judgements must be supported by relevant and accurate material. If not, they are assertions. • Knowledge must not be credited in isolation, it should only be credited where it is used as the

Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
			• Answers might consider the role of the execution of the Romanovs in increasing control. • Answers might consider the role of terror in maintaining the Red Army. • Answers might consider the brutal suppression of rebellions like Tambov and Kronstadt. • Answers might consider the use of forced requisitioning to control the peasantry. **In arguing that the use of terror was not the most important reason for the Bolsheviks increasing their control of Russia,** • Answers might consider the short-term popularity of the Lenin Decrees, such as the Decree on Land. • Answers might consider how the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk allowed Russia to withdraw from the First World War, reducing external threats. • Answers might consider the use of agitprop trains and other propaganda in the Civil War. • Answers might consider the role of Trotsky and the effectiveness of the Red Army, which ultimately enabled the Bolsheviks to win the Civil War and gain control. • Answers might consider the failings of the White opposition in recovering control. • Answers might consider the increased popularity resulting from the New Economic Policy.		basis for analysis and evaluation, in line with descriptions in the mark scheme.

Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
3			**'Russia was moving away from revolution on the eve of the First World War. There is certainly evidence to support this. It is not convincing to speak of a revolutionary situation'** **S. A. Smith, Russia in Revolution: An Empire in Crisis, 1890 to 1928, published in 2017.** **Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of this interpretation, making reference to other interpretations you have studied.** **The historical debate centres around the extent to which Russia was stable prior to the First World War and whether a revolution was likely.** **In analysing the strengths and weaknesses of this interpretation,** answers might consider that Russia was stable, and a revolution was unlikely, to counter this view answers might consider aspects of Russia that suggests instability and the likelihood of a revolution. Answers may also challenge the interpretation by considering areas where Russia was only superficially stable. **In analysing and evaluating the strengths of the interpretation**, answers might use knowledge and understanding of: • The impact of 'Stolypin's Coup' in stabilising the Duma, removing most radical deputies.	20	The indicative content lists features of the period studied that relate to the question set. **Neither significance nor relative importance are attributed to the features listed.** The indicative content is intended to reflect the knowledge and understanding a candidate is likely to analyse and evaluate in order to arrive at a judgement in line with the question set. • No set answer is expected. • Candidates must use their knowledge and understanding of the historical context and the wider historical debate surrounding the issue to analyse and evaluate the given interpretation. • Candidates must refer to at least one other interpretation. • The quality of analysis and evaluation of the interpretations should be considered when assigning answers to a level, not the quantity of other interpretations used in the answer. • Other interpretations considered as part of evaluation and analysis do not need to be attributed to specific named historians, but they must be recognisable historical interpretations, rather than the candidate's own viewpoint. • Answers may include more on strengths or more on limitations and there is no requirement for a 50/50 split in the evaluation, however for level 5 there should be well supported evaluation of both and for level 4 supported evaluation of both, in line with levels descriptors. • Candidates are not required to construct their own interpretation.

Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
			• The significant powers that remained in Nicholas' hands through the Fundamental Laws, which gave him the power to pass laws and dismiss the Duma. • The improved position in the countryside, with relatively few uprisings compared to the earlier part of Nicholas' reign. • The ability of the Okhrana to infiltrate, arrest and exile opponents of the regime. **In analysing the limitations of the given interpretation,** answers might use knowledge and understanding of: • Continued opposition within the Duma despite 'Stolypin's Coup'; even the tame Third Duma had to be suspended. • The continued activity of radical opposition such as the Populists, who assassinated Stolypin in 1911. • The increasing number of political strikes in cities from 1912, some of which were fanned by Bolshevik agitation. • The continued need to use repression to retain control, such as at the Lena Goldfields in 1912 **Other interpretations that might be used in evaluation of the given interpretation are:** • Interpretations which recognise that Nicholas only retained control in Russia through repression and so was unstable.		

Question			Answer	Mark	Guidance
			• Interpretations which recognise that Russia might have been stable in the countryside but not in the cities. • Interpretations which recognise that Russian stability was only superficial. • Interpretations which recognise that Russia became less stable after Stolypin's assassination.		

APPENDIX 1 – this contains a generic mark scheme grid

	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 for Section A, Questions 1 and 2: Essay [30]
Level 5 25–30 marks	There is a mostly consistent focus on the question. Generally accurate and detailed knowledge and understanding is demonstrated through most of the answer and is evaluated and analysed in order to reach substantiated judgements, but these are not consistently well-developed. There is a well-developed line of reasoning which is clear and logically structured. The information presented is relevant and in most part substantiated.
Level 4 19–24 marks	The question is generally addressed. Generally accurate and sometimes detailed knowledge and understanding is demonstrated through most of the answer with evaluation and some analysis, and this is used appropriately to support the judgements that are made. There is a line of reasoning presented with some structure. The information presented is in the most-part relevant and supported by some evidence.
Level 3 13–18 marks	The question is partially addressed. There is demonstration of some relevant knowledge and understanding, which is evaluated and analysed in parts of the answer, but in places knowledge is imparted rather than being used. The analysis is appropriately linked to the judgements made, though the way in which it supports the judgements may not always be made explicit.
Level 2 7–12 marks	The focus is more on the topic than the specific demands of the question. Knowledge and understanding is limited and not well used, with only limited evaluation and analysis, which is only sometimes linked appropriately to the judgements made. The information has some relevance but is communicated in an unstructured way. The information is supported by limited evidence and the relationship to the evidence may not be clear.
Level 1 1–6 marks	The answer relates to the topic but not the specific question. The answer contains only very limited relevant knowledge which is evaluated and analysed in a very limited way. Judgements are unsupported and are not linked to analysis. Relevant knowledge is limited, generalised, and poorly used; attempts at argument are no more than assertion. Information presented is basic and may be ambiguous or unstructured. The information is supported by limited evidence.
0 marks	No evidence of understanding and no demonstration of any relevant knowledge.

	AO3: Analyse and evaluate, in relation to the historical context, different ways in which aspects of the past have been interpreted.
	Generic mark scheme for Section B, Question 3: Interpretation [20]
Level 5 17–20 marks	The answer has a very good analysis of the interpretation. It uses detailed and relevant knowledge of the historical context and shows thorough understanding of the wider historical debate, in the form of detailed examination of other interpretations, in order to produce a well-supported evaluation of both the strengths and weaknesses of the given interpretation.
Level 4 13–16 marks	The answer has a good analysis of the interpretation. It uses relevant knowledge of the historical context and good understanding of the wider historical debate, in the form of examination of other interpretations, in order to produce a supported evaluation of both the strengths and weaknesses of the given interpretation.
Level 3 9–12 marks	The answer has a partial analysis of the interpretation. It uses some relevant knowledge of the historical context and shows partial understanding of the wider historical debate, in the form of reference to other interpretations, in order to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the given interpretation. The evaluation may be un-even with only limited treatment of either limitations or strengths, but both will be addressed.
Level 2 5–8 marks	The answer has a limited analysis of the interpretation. It uses generalised knowledge of the historical context and shows limited understanding of the wider historical debate, in the form of generalised reference to other interpretations, in order to produce a limited evaluation of the given interpretation. The evaluation may deal with either strengths or limitations in a very superficial way, or may only address limitations or strengths.
Level 1 1–4 marks	The answer has a very limited analysis of the interpretation which may be descriptive and relate more to the topic area than the detail of the interpretation. It uses very limited and generalised knowledge of the historical context and shows very limited or no understanding of the wider historical debate, with reference to other interpretations being implicit or lacking, in order to produce a very simplistic, asserted evaluation of the given interpretation.
0 marks	No evidence of understanding or reference to the interpretation.

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