

METHODIST GIRLS' SCHOOL

Founded in 1887



PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2026 Secondary 4

HISTORY

Paper 2 Developments in the post-World War II world: The Cold War and 2174/02
decolonisation in Southeast Asia, 1940s-1991

Levels of Response Marking Scheme (LORMS)

Section A: Source-Based Case Study

Case Study: Was the Malayan Union fair?

1 (a) Study Source A.

What does Source A suggest about how the Malay rulers agreed to the Malayan Union treaty? Explain your answer.

[5]

Level (L)	Descriptor	Mark
L1	Answers based on undeveloped provenance or valid but unsupported inference i.e., only about the content or the surface message <i>e.g., Source A suggests that the Malay rulers agreed to the Malayan Union treaty by signing it.</i>	[1]
L2	Valid inference about how the Malay rulers agreed, supported by source content Award the higher mark for more developed answers. <i>e.g., Source A suggests that some rulers agreed willingly and without difficulty. Source A states that Sultan Ibrahim of Johor was "openly agreeable", declared "These are all right by me", and that at the second meeting "there was no hitch or awkwardness" before he signed. This implies that the Malay rulers' agreement appeared voluntary and cooperative.</i>	[2-3]
L3	Answers based on a holistic interpretation of how the Malay rulers agreed Award the higher mark for a holistic point of tensions interpreted, supported. <i>e.g., Source A suggests that the Malay rulers' agreements were more reluctant and pressured than it outwardly appeared, differing from ruler to ruler. Although Sultan Ibrahim seemed "openly agreeable", the Sultan of Kedah signed only to say, "it was the most distressing and painful moment of his whole life" and that he would "lose the loyalty, respect, and affection of his subjects, and be pursued with curses towards his grave." This implies that behind the signatures lay deep distress and a sense that the rulers had little real choice. The Malay rulers agreed under moral and political pressure rather than through genuinely free negotiation, which was why the Malayan Union scheme was so bitterly resented once its implications were understood.</i>	[4-5]

(b) Study Sources B and C.

Having read Source B, how useful is Source C as evidence of the way the British secured the Malay Rulers' agreements? Explain your answer.

[6]

Level (L)	Descriptor	Mark
L1	Answers based on undeveloped provenance <i>e.g., Source C is useful because it is from the British Colonial Secretary speaking in Parliament.</i>	[1]
L2	Answers based on only the usefulness of Source C in content Award the higher mark for more developed answers. <i>e.g., Source C is useful as it shows the British claim that the Rulers agreed freely, without coercion. Source C states that "no threat of deposition was used" and that "there was no time limit, nor was there a threat about deposition." This implies that, officially, the British secured the Sultans' agreement through proper and voluntary negotiation.</i>	[2]
L3	Answers based on comparison of Sources B and C to determine Source's usefulness <i>e.g., Source C is not useful because, when read against Source B, it contradicts the British government's own private intentions. Source C publicly denies any threat, stating "no threat of deposition was used." However, Source B reveals the opposite intention in private, stating that MacMichael's "hand should be strengthened by the firm assurance that he can, if necessary, make it clear to any recalcitrant Sultan that we intend to carry our proposal through." This implies that Source C cannot be trusted as a literal account of how the agreements were secured, since the government had privately resolved to apply pressure. Since Source C is unreliable, it is limited/not useful.</i>	[3]
L4	Answers that evaluate the usefulness of Source C by cross-referencing to Source A or contextual knowledge Award the higher mark for more developed answers. Note: An answer that uses Source A only to <i>support</i> Source C is capped at L4/4. L4/5 requires candidates to weigh the contradictory Kedah evidence in Source A rather than rest on Sultan Ibrahim's agreement alone. <i>e.g., Source C is reliable, and therefore useful, because it is supported by Source A. Source C denies that any coercion was used, stating "no threat of deposition was used" and there was "no time limit." Source A supports this for Johor. Source A states that Sultan Ibrahim was "openly agreeable", declared "These are all right by me", and signed with "no hitch or awkwardness." This implies that at least some rulers did agree freely and without threats, which corroborates Source C's account and makes it reliable and useful as evidence of how the agreements were secured. [This answer is capped at L4/4 as it rests on Sultan Ibrahim alone and overlooks the Sultan of Kedah's distress in Source A, which contradicts Source C's specific denials.]</i>	[4-5]

Level (L)	Descriptor	Mark
	e.g., <i>Source C is reliable, and therefore useful, once it is cross-referenced with Source A. Source C insists that "there was no time limit" and "no threat about deposition", presenting the negotiations as calm and proper. However, Source A challenges this claim. Source A shows that MacMichael "agreed to a delay of two days, but no longer", which suggests a time limit was in fact imposed, and that the Sultan of Kedah signed only to call it "the most distressing and painful moment of his whole life." This implies that Source C's denial is untrue; the rulers signed under real pressure and distress, so the Colonial Secretary's account is unreliable and of limited use as evidence of how the agreements were genuinely secured.</i> [L4/5]	
L5	L3 + Answers that evaluate the usefulness of Source C through a critical analysis of its provenance/purpose e.g., <i>[As L4 plus] Source C is of limited use once its provenance and purpose are weighed against Source B. Source C is a statement made by the Colonial Secretary in Parliament on 6 March 1946, when reports of coercion were causing embarrassment; its purpose was to reassure Parliament and defend the government's reputation, which is exactly why it dismisses talk of a time limit or deposition as "misrepresentations of fact". Source B, however, is a secret Cabinet memorandum from 4 October 1945 — written for internal eyes only, with no reason to conceal the truth. Precisely because it was confidential, Source B is the more candid record of British intentions, and it shows the government privately resolved that MacMichael could "make it clear to any recalcitrant Sultan that we intend to carry our proposal through." Set against this frank private memorandum, Source C's public denial is exposed as self-serving and unreliable, making it not useful. While Source C is not useful, its limited use is mainly for revealing how the British publicly concealed the coercion that Source B confirms they were prepared to use, rather than as truthful evidence of how the rulers' agreements were actually obtained.</i>	[6]

(c) Study Source D.

Why did Utusan Melayu publish this photograph in 1946? Explain your answer.

[5]

Level (L)	Descriptor	Mark
L1	Answers based on undeveloped provenance or on the content/sub-message only i.e., only about what the photograph shows e.g., <i>Utusan Melayu published the photograph to show Malays protesting against the Malayan Union.</i>	[1]
L2	Answers that identify a purpose based on the message of the source i.e., because of the circumstances Award the higher mark for more developed answers. e.g., <i>Utusan Melayu published the photograph to show the strength of Malay opposition to the Malayan Union. Source D shows a large Malay rally in Kuala Lumpur with banners reading "BANTAH MALAYAN UNION" (Protest Malayan Union) and "HIDUP MELAYU" (Long Live the Malays), with protesters wearing white mourning bands. This implies that the newspaper wanted to record and display how deeply the Malays rejected the scheme.</i>	[2-3]
L3	Answers based on the purpose (intended effect on the audience) interpreted in context Award the higher mark for the author's purpose interpreted in context. e.g., <i>Utusan Melayu published the photograph to unite the Malays into mass opposition and to pressure the British into abandoning the Malayan Union. Utusan Melayu's message was the Malayan Union was unfair. Source D shows Malays wearing white mourning bands on their songkok, with banners proclaiming "TANAH MELAYU HAK MELAYU" (Malay Land, Malay Rights) and "DAULATKAN RAJA-RAJA MELAYU" (Sovereign Malay Kings). This implies that the newspaper, as a Malay-owned paper that played a key role in raising nationalist consciousness, intended to stir Malay readers into defending Malay sovereignty, land and special position. This fits the 1946 context, when the Malayan Union threatened to reduce the Sultans to advisers and extend citizenship rights to non-Malays. The photograph was published to portray the protest as a righteous, unified defence of the Malay homeland, and thereby strengthen the campaign, led by UMNO, that eventually forced the British to withdraw the scheme.</i>	[4-5]

(d) Study Sources E and F.

How similar are these sources about responses to the Malayan Union?
Explain your answer.

[6]

Level (L)	Descriptor	Mark
L1	Answers based on undeveloped provenance or false matching <i>e.g., The sources are similar because both are written by historians about the Chinese response to the Malayan Union.</i> OR <i>e.g., Source E shows the local Indian press response, but Source F shows the Malayan communists' appeal to the young Chinese.</i>	[1]
L2	Similarity OR difference based on comparison of the content of Sources E and F Award the higher mark for more developed answers. <i>e.g., The sources are similar in showing that many Chinese did not react strongly to the Malayan Union. Source E states that reactions "ranged from scepticism about its practicability to satisfaction" and that there were "mixed feelings over what 'Malayan Union citizenship' meant." Similarly, Source F states that many Chinese "had no single political voice" and "took little interest in the arguments over the Malayan Union and citizenship rights." This implies that both sources agree that the Chinese response was divided and, for many, lukewarm rather than united.</i> OR <i>e.g., The sources are different in the response they emphasise. Source E emphasises that "Chinese newspapers welcomed the Malayan Union's equal citizenship for all" and that "the proposals were favourable to the Chinese and sparked real interest." In contrast, Source F emphasises Chinese indifference and disadvantage, stating that the new "Secretary for Chinese Affairs" had "no face with the Chinese" and that many Chinese "took little interest." This implies that Source E stresses active, positive engagement by the Chinese press, while Source F stresses political weakness and apathy.</i>	[2-3]
L3	Answers based on both aspects Award the higher mark for more developed answers.	[4-5]
L4	L3 + Evaluation through a critical analysis of the provenance of Sources E and/or F <i>e.g., [As L3 plus] Source E is a 2014 account by a Malayan Chinese historian and openly signals that it captures only "a literate, politically aware, and vocal minority", so its picture of an engaged, welcoming Chinese press is not the whole community. Source F, a 2013 British historian's account, deliberately looks beyond the press to the mass of ordinary Chinese and explains their disengagement. Because each author sets</i>	[6]

	<i>out to describe a different section of Chinese society, their accounts are complementary rather than genuinely contradictory. Taken together they support similar underlying conclusion that the Chinese community was fragmented, with only an educated minority engaging actively while the majority remained disengaged.</i>	
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(e) Study all the sources.

'The Malayan Union was unfair.' How far do these sources support this view?
Use the sources and your knowledge to explain your answer.

[8]

Level (L)	Descriptor	Mark
L1	Writes about the hypothesis, no valid source use <i>e.g., The Malayan Union was unfair because it took away the power of the Sultans and gave citizenship to non-Malays.</i>	[1]
L2	Yes OR No, supported by valid source use Award 2 marks for one Yes or one No, supported by valid source use, and an additional mark for each subsequent valid source use up to a maximum of 4 marks.	[2-4]

Level (L)	Descriptor	Mark												
L3	Yes AND No, supported by valid source use Award 5 marks for one Yes and one No, supported by valid source use, and an additional mark for each subsequent valid source use up to a maximum of 7 marks. Notes: - To score in L2/L3, there must be source use, i.e., direct reference to source content. - Only credit source use where reference is made to a source by letter or direct quote. Simply writing about issues is not enough. - Higher marks in L2/L3 to be awarded on the number of sources used. For L2 and L3, award a bonus of up to 2 marks (+1/+1) for use of contextual knowledge (CK) to question up to two sources in relation to their reliability, sufficiency, etc. The total mark for the question must not exceed 8. <table><tr><th>Support</th><th>Not Support</th></tr><tr><th>A, D, F, or B</th><th>E, C, or A</th></tr><tr><td> e.g., Source A supports the view. It states that the Sultan of Kedah signed but said it was "the most distressing and painful moment of his whole life" and that he would "lose the loyalty, respect, and affection of his subjects." This implies that the Union was unfair because the rulers signed under great distress and pressure rather than through genuinely free agreement. [+1 use of CK]: Source A is reliable in supporting the claim. MacMichael threatened to remove the Sultans if they did not agree to the Malayan Union. He told the Sultans that the British would open investigations into any collaboration of the Sultans with the Japanese. </td><td> e.g., Source E does not support the view. It states that "Chinese newspapers welcomed the Malayan Union's equal citizenship for all" and that "the proposals were favourable to the Chinese." This implies that, to the non-Malays, the Union was fair because it finally offered them citizenship rights long denied under the pre-war system. [+1 use of CK]: Source E reflects the genuine post-war aim of building a united Malayan nation; for the Chinese and Indians who had lived and worked in Malaya for generations, equal citizenship was a fair recognition of their stake in the country. </td></tr></table> <table><tr><th>Support</th><th>Not Support</th></tr><tr><th>A, D, F, or B</th><th>E, C, or A</th></tr><tr><td> e.g., Source D supports the view. It shows a mass Malay rally with banners reading "BANTAH MALAYAN UNION" and "TANAH MELAYU HAK MELAYU" (Malay Land, Malay Rights), with protesters in white mourning bands. This implies that the Malays saw the Union as unfair because it stripped away Malay sovereignty </td><td> e.g., Source C does not support the view. It states that "no threat of deposition was used" and there was "no time limit" placed on the Sultans. This implies that, officially, the agreements were secured fairly and without coercion. e.g., Source A does not (wholly) support the view. It states that Sultan Ibrahim of Johor was "openly agreeable", said "These are all right by </td></tr></table>	Support	Not Support	A, D, F, or B	E, C, or A	e.g., Source A supports the view. It states that the Sultan of Kedah signed but said it was "the most distressing and painful moment of his whole life" and that he would "lose the loyalty, respect, and affection of his subjects." This implies that the Union was unfair because the rulers signed under great distress and pressure rather than through genuinely free agreement. [+1 use of CK]: Source A is reliable in supporting the claim. MacMichael threatened to remove the Sultans if they did not agree to the Malayan Union. He told the Sultans that the British would open investigations into any collaboration of the Sultans with the Japanese.	e.g., Source E does not support the view. It states that "Chinese newspapers welcomed the Malayan Union's equal citizenship for all" and that "the proposals were favourable to the Chinese." This implies that, to the non-Malays, the Union was fair because it finally offered them citizenship rights long denied under the pre-war system. [+1 use of CK]: Source E reflects the genuine post-war aim of building a united Malayan nation; for the Chinese and Indians who had lived and worked in Malaya for generations, equal citizenship was a fair recognition of their stake in the country.	Support	Not Support	A, D, F, or B	E, C, or A	e.g., Source D supports the view. It shows a mass Malay rally with banners reading "BANTAH MALAYAN UNION" and "TANAH MELAYU HAK MELAYU" (Malay Land, Malay Rights), with protesters in white mourning bands. This implies that the Malays saw the Union as unfair because it stripped away Malay sovereignty	e.g., Source C does not support the view. It states that "no threat of deposition was used" and there was "no time limit" placed on the Sultans. This implies that, officially, the agreements were secured fairly and without coercion. e.g., Source A does not (wholly) support the view. It states that Sultan Ibrahim of Johor was "openly agreeable", said "These are all right by	[5-8]
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Level (L)	Descriptor	Mark
	and special rights over their own homeland. <i>e.g., Source F supports the view. It states that the Union replaced the "Chinese Protectorate" with a "Secretary for Chinese Affairs" who had "no face with the Chinese", leaving "official channels weakened." This implies that the Union was also unfair to the Chinese, whose established channels of representation were downgraded.</i> <i>e.g., Source B supports the view. It states that Britain would "make it clear to any recalcitrant Sultan that we intend to carry our proposal through." This implies that the Union was unfair because it was imposed on the Rulers through coercion rather than genuine consent.</i>	<i>me", and signed with "no hitch or awkwardness." This implies that, at least for some rulers, agreement was given willingly, so the process was not entirely unfair.</i>

Section B: Essays

Answer **two** questions.

- 2 'World War II in Europe ended because of the entry of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer.

[10]

Level (L)	Descriptor	Mark
L1	Identifies/Describes the topic or other factor(s) for the topic Award 1 mark for identifying one factor, 2 marks for identifying two or more factors. Award 2 marks for describing one factor and 3 marks for describing two or more factors. <i>e.g., World War II in Europe ended because of the entry of the USSR. In June 1941, Germany launched Operation Barbarossa and invaded the USSR. The USSR survived the invasion and put up a strong resistance against the Germans on the Eastern Front. Around 90 per cent of German casualties in WWII were on the Eastern Front against the USSR.</i> <i>e.g., American entry into the war was another reason that ended WWII in Europe. When the USA entered the war in late 1941, it bolstered the Allied forces from the Western Front. The USA's vast resources were mobilised and it became known as the 'arsenal of democracy' as it out-produced the Axis powers.</i>	[1-3]
L2	Explains how the given factor led to the outcome of the issue OR Explains how other factor(s) contributed to the outcome of the issue Award 4 marks for an explanation of how the given factor led to the outcome of the issue OR how other factor(s) contributed to the outcome of the issue, and an additional mark for additional factor(s) or further supporting detail, to a maximum of 5 marks. Agree: <i>e.g., The entry of the USSR into the war was the main reason for the end of WWII in Europe because the USSR bore the brunt of the German war machine and wore it down. When Germany launched Operation Barbarossa in June 1941, the USSR was almost defeated, with Stalin on the verge of abandoning Moscow in September 1941. However, the harsh Russian winter halted the German advance, and Stalin used that time to reorganise the Soviet war effort. The Red Army was completely reformed. Officers were given greater freedom to act, effective new weapons such as the T-34 tank were produced in huge numbers, and harsh discipline such as Order 227 ('Not a step back') was enforced. The USSR also shifted its major industrial complexes east to the Urals, Siberia and Kazakhstan, and by 1943 it produced one and a half times as many aircraft and twice as many tanks as the Germans. This enabled the USSR to turn the tide at the Battle of Stalingrad in early 1943 and the Battle of Kursk in July 1943, after which the Soviets advanced until they reached Berlin in May 1945. Thus, the USSR was instrumental in wearing down and defeating the German army, as around 90 per cent of German casualties occurred on the Eastern Front, making it the main reason WWII in Europe ended.</i>	[4-5]
L3	Explains how the given factor AND other factor(s) led to the outcome of the issue Award 6 marks for an explanation of how the given factor led to the outcome of the issue AND another factor that contributed to the outcome of the issue, and an additional mark for further supporting detail or factor, to a maximum of 8 marks. Disagree:	[6-8]

Level (L)	Descriptor	Mark
	e.g., [As L2 plus] American entry into the war was another reason that ended WWII in Europe as it bolstered the Allied forces with overwhelming resources. When the USA entered the war in late 1941, its vast resources were mobilised as its people, factories, shipyards and farms joined the war effort. Between 1941 and 1945, US factories produced 250,000 aircraft, 90,000 tanks and 5,600 merchant ships, and by 1944 the USA was producing almost half of the weapons made globally, becoming the 'arsenal of democracy'. Through the Lend-Lease scheme, the USA supplied Britain and the USSR with food, raw materials, weapons and equipment, including over 500,000 motor vehicles and half of the USSR's supply of rubber and copper. Thus, US industrial production gave the Allies the upper hand and contributed to Germany's defeat, as the Axis powers could not match this staggering output. e.g., [As L2 plus] The weaknesses of the Axis powers were another reason that led to the end of WWII in Europe, as they made it easier for the Allies to defeat Germany. Germany's command structure was inefficient as Hitler regularly intervened in military decisions despite having little high-level command experience. His insistence on seizing and holding Stalingrad against his commanders' advice cost over 750,000 casualties and the loss of an irreplaceable field army by February 1943. Furthermore, when Hitler invaded the USSR in 1941, he placed Germany in a two-front war, preventing him from concentrating his efforts and resources on a single front. Germany also suffered from poor planning, failing to build aircraft carriers or heavy bombers and neglecting radar, which plagued the Luftwaffe. Hence, Germany's own military weaknesses caused it to be gradually worn down by the Allied forces.	
L4	Reaches a balanced conclusion based on an explicit consideration of the relative importance of different factors Award an additional 2 marks to a maximum of 10 marks. The total marks to be awarded for the response will be based on marks obtained at L3 + 2 bonus marks: i.e., L3/6+2; L3/7+2; L3/8+2. e.g., [as L3 plus] The entry of the USSR was the main reason WWII in Europe ended, as it was the USSR that wore down and destroyed the bulk of the German army and it was Soviet forces that encircled Berlin in 1945. While American entry brought overwhelming resources and Germany's own weaknesses hastened its defeat, these factors were only decisive because the USSR had already broken the back of the German war machine at Stalingrad and Kursk. American resources, though vital, would have counted for little without the Soviet resistance that absorbed and destroyed German manpower on the Eastern Front. Thus, although all three factors contributed, the entry of the USSR was the most important reason for the end of WWII in Europe.	9-10

- 3 'The Viet Minh's success in the First Indochina War, 1946–1954, was mainly due to the support of the peasants.' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer.

[10]

Level (L)	Descriptor	Mark
L1	Identifies/Describes the topic or other factor(s) for the topic Award 1 mark for identifying one factor, 2 marks for identifying two or more factors. Award 2 marks for describing one factor and 3 marks for describing two or more factors. <i>e.g., Peasant support was central to the Viet Minh's victory, but it was not the only reason. The leadership of Ho Chi Minh and Vo Nguyen Giap, as well as military aid from Communist China after 1949, also contributed significantly to the defeat of the French.</i> <i>e.g., The support of the peasants was a key reason for the Viet Minh's success. The Viet Minh won over the rural population through its nationalist appeal and promises of land reform. Peasants provided food, shelter, intelligence and recruits, allowing Viet Minh guerrillas to move freely across the countryside.</i> <i>e.g., A further counterargument lies in the weaknesses of the French, which contributed to the Viet Minh's success. The French were unpopular colonial rulers, fought a costly and increasingly unpopular war far from home, and suffered a decisive military defeat at Dien Bien Phu in 1954.</i>	[1-3]
L2	Explains how the given factor led to the outcome of the issue OR Explains how other factor(s) contributed to the outcome of the issue Award 4 marks for an explanation of how the given factor led to the outcome of the issue OR how other factor(s) contributed to the outcome of the issue, and an additional mark for additional factor(s) or further supporting detail, to a maximum of 5 marks. Agree: <i>e.g., The support of the peasants was a fundamental reason for the Viet Minh's success in the First Indochina War. The Viet Minh, under Ho Chi Minh, presented itself as a nationalist movement fighting to free Vietnam from French colonial rule, which won it the loyalty of the largely peasant population. The Viet Minh promised to redistribute land from wealthy landlords to poor peasants, and in areas under their control they carried out land reforms that improved the lives of ordinary villagers. This gave the peasants a genuine stake in a Viet Minh victory. In return, the peasants supplied the guerrillas with food, shelter, porters and a steady stream of recruits, and passed on information about French movements while denying the same to the enemy. Because the guerrillas depended on the villages to hide, feed and resupply them, this popular support made it possible for the Viet Minh to wage an effective guerrilla war across the countryside. The French, by contrast, controlled the towns but could never dominate the rural areas where most Vietnamese lived. The peasants were, in effect, the water in which the Viet Minh guerrillas swam, and without that base of support the insurgency could not have survived, let alone won.</i>	[4-5]

Level (L)	Descriptor	Mark
L3	Explains how the given factor AND other factor(s) led to the outcome of the issue Award 6 marks for an explanation of how the given factor led to the outcome of the issue AND another factor that contributed to the outcome of the issue, and an additional mark for further supporting detail or factor, to a maximum of 8 marks. Disagree: e.g., [As L2 plus] However, military aid from Communist China after 1949 was also a significant factor in the Viet Minh's success. When the Chinese Communists won their civil war in 1949, they were able to supply the Viet Minh across a shared border with weapons, ammunition, artillery and training. This transformed the Viet Minh from a lightly armed guerrilla force into an army capable of fighting conventional set-piece battles. Chinese-supplied heavy artillery proved decisive at Dien Bien Phu in 1954, where the Viet Minh were able to besiege and overwhelm the French garrison — a victory that would not have been possible on peasant support alone. e.g., [As L2 plus] The strong and united leadership of the Viet Minh turned peasant support into military success. Ho Chi Minh provided political direction and a unifying nationalist cause, while Vo Nguyen Giap developed a patient strategy of guerrilla warfare that wore down the better-equipped French forces. The Viet Minh organised the population efficiently, building a disciplined army and a shadow administration in the countryside. This effective leadership and organisation allowed the Viet Minh to mobilise the resources and manpower that peasant support provided, and to sustain a long war until the French will to fight collapsed. e.g., [As L2 plus] A further counterargument lies in the weaknesses of the French themselves, which contributed to the Viet Minh's success. The French were fighting to restore an unpopular colonial regime and their attempt to rule through the former emperor Bao Dai failed to win Vietnamese loyalty. The war was fought thousands of miles from France, was extremely costly, and grew increasingly unpopular at home, sapping the French will to continue. The catastrophic defeat at Dien Bien Phu in 1954 shattered French morale and public support for the war, forcing France to negotiate at Geneva and withdraw—showing that French failings, as much as Viet Minh strengths, brought about the outcome.	[6-8]
L4	Reaches a balanced conclusion based on an explicit consideration of the relative importance of different factors Award an additional 2 marks to a maximum of 10 marks. The total marks to be awarded for the response will be based on marks obtained at L3 + 2 bonus marks: i.e., L3/6+2; L3/7+2; L3/8+2. e.g., [as L3 plus] In conclusion, the support of the peasants was the underlying factor in the Viet Minh's success, as it provided the manpower, supplies and secure rural base that made a sustained war of resistance possible in the first place. The leadership of Ho Chi Minh and Giap was a contributing factor that channelled this popular support into an organised and effective military effort. However, it was the decisive factor — Chinese military aid after 1949 combined with the collapse of French will after Dien Bien Phu — that finally converted a stalemate into outright victory. Hence, while peasant support was the essential foundation without which the Viet Minh could	[9-10]

Level (L)	Descriptor	Mark
	<i>not have fought at all, it was the interplay of committed leadership, external aid and French weakness that ultimately delivered independence. The Viet Minh's success was therefore the result of both deep-rooted popular support and the wider military and political conditions that turned that support into a war-winning force.</i>	

- 4 'The USSR's decline before Gorbachev came to power was mainly caused by a weak Soviet economy.' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer.

[10]

Level (L)	Descriptor	Mark
L1	Identifies/Describes the topic or other factor(s) for the topic Award 1 mark for identifying one factor, 2 marks for identifying two or more factors. Award 2 marks for describing one factor and 3 marks for describing two or more factors. <i>e.g., The weaknesses of the Soviet economy were a major reason for the USSR's decline before Gorbachev came to power. After the impressive growth rates of the 1950s and 1960s, the Soviet economy entered what Gorbachev later called the "Era of Stagnation", with industrial output falling to a 3 to 4 per cent decline by the late 1970s.</i> <i>e.g., The USSR's heavy military spending also contributed to its decline. It is estimated that 30 to 50 per cent of Soviet resources went to the military, including the costly nuclear weapons programme and the war in Afghanistan from 1979.</i> <i>e.g., A further counterargument lies in the external pressure applied by the United States under President Reagan. Reagan massively increased US defence spending and launched the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) in 1982, forcing the already over-stretched USSR into an arms race it could not afford.</i>	[1-3]
L2	Explains how the given factor led to the outcome of the issue OR Explains how other factor(s) contributed to the outcome of the issue Award 4 marks for an explanation of how the given factor led to the outcome of the issue OR how other factor(s) contributed to the outcome of the issue, and an additional mark for additional factor(s) or further supporting detail, to a maximum of 5 marks. Agree: <i>e.g., The weaknesses of the Soviet economy were a fundamental cause of the USSR's decline before Gorbachev came to power. The rigid command economy, in which the state controlled production, prices and wages, had worked well when the economy consisted of a small number of very large industries such as coal, steel and electricity. However, as the economy grew and expanded by the 1970s, it became overwhelmed by the increasing demands placed upon it. The government acted too slowly, made poor decisions and was very slow to bring new technology into its industries. As a result, growth stagnated: agricultural output growth fell from 4.8 per cent a year in the 1950s to 1.8 per cent in the 1970s, and by the late 1970s industrial output had dropped from double-digit growth to a decline. These structural weaknesses meant the USSR steadily fell behind Western economies, whose real GDP per capita pulled far ahead of the Soviet Union's between 1970 and 1985. The command economy's prioritising of industry and military spending over consumer goods also meant that ordinary Soviet citizens endured a poor standard of living, deepening the sense that the system was failing.</i> <i>e.g., Additionally, the economic decline was worsened by the disillusionment of the Soviet workforce. Widespread corruption meant that managers were often appointed through personal connections or bribes, while</i>	[4-5]

Level (L)	Descriptor	Mark
	<i>tightly controlled wages gave workers little incentive to work hard. Those who protested risked arrest by the secret police. This lack of productivity and growing discontent, reflected in the many anti-communist jokes circulating at the time, drained the economy of dynamism and steadily eroded confidence in the communist system well before Gorbachev took power.</i> OR <i>The burden of the USSR's external commitments and military over-spending was also a significant factor in its decline. The USSR fought proxy wars and provided money, technical equipment, advisors, food and medical supplies to allies such as the Arab states, Cuba and the communist regimes of Eastern Europe, which relied heavily on Soviet subsidies for oil and resources. These commitments were a substantial financial burden that increased dramatically when the war in Afghanistan broke out in 1979. The war became the USSR's version of the Vietnam War, tying down Soviet troops for ten years against the US- and Saudi-backed Mujahideen. Combined with the estimated 30 to 50 per cent of resources devoted to the military, this over-investment starved education, research and consumer sectors of funds, accelerating the economic decline rather than being a mere symptom of it.</i>	
L3	Explains how the given factor AND other factor(s) led to the outcome of the issue Award 6 marks for an explanation of how the given factor led to the outcome of the issue AND another factor that contributed to the outcome of the issue, and an additional mark for further supporting detail or factor, to a maximum of 8 marks. Disagree: <i>e.g., [As L2 plus] The growing opposition to communism within Eastern Europe was also a significant factor in the USSR's decline before Gorbachev came to power. Because the Soviet economy was closely tied to Eastern Europe through Comecon, unrest in the satellite states directly threatened Soviet authority. This was clearest in Poland, where the economy hit crisis in the late 1970s: rising unemployment and food prices galvanised workers into small independent trade unions that merged, under Lech Wałęsa, to form Solidarity. Solidarity led a series of controlled strikes to push for economic reform and free elections, gaining increasing popularity. Even though General Jaruzelski imposed martial law in December 1981, imprisoning Wałęsa and almost 10,000 members and banning Solidarity, the fact that such open defiance had emerged and had to be crushed by force showed that the USSR was steadily losing its grip on its own bloc years before Gorbachev took power.</i> <i>e.g., [As L2 plus] Finally, the ageing and increasingly ineffective Soviet leadership was a further factor contributing to the decline. Leonid Brezhnev, who led the USSR from 1964, was a cautious leader who opposed significant political or economic reform, yet he suffered from poor health throughout the 1970s and found it increasingly difficult to make critical decisions. His death in 1982 was followed by rapid succession: Yuri Andropov, and then Konstantin Chernenko, who led the USSR for less than 14 months before dying in early 1985. This procession of elderly and ailing leaders meant that the mounting problems of the command economy, the war in Afghanistan and popular disillusionment went unaddressed for years,</i>	[6-8]

Level (L)	Descriptor	Mark
	<i>allowing the USSR's decline to deepen well before a younger, reform-minded Gorbachev finally came to power in 1985.</i> OR <i>e.g., [As L2 plus] A further counterargument lies in the renewed external pressure from the United States under President Reagan. Reagan took office in January 1981 with an aggressive anti-communist stance, denouncing the USSR as an "evil empire" and massively increasing the US defence budget — by \$32.6 billion in his first two weeks alone. In 1982 he approved the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), or "Star Wars", a multi-billion-dollar project to destroy incoming missiles from space. Although SDI never became a viable weapon, it put enormous pressure on the Soviets, who were unsure whether it would become reality; already struggling with stretched resources, the USSR found that renewed arms spending threatened to ruin it, intensifying its decline before Gorbachev ever came to power.</i>	
L4	Reaches a balanced conclusion based on an explicit consideration of the relative importance of different factors Award an additional 2 marks to a maximum of 10 marks. The total marks to be awarded for the response will be based on marks obtained at L3 + 2 bonus marks: i.e., L3/6+2; L3/7+2; L3/8+2. <i>e.g., [as L3 plus] In conclusion, the weakness of the Soviet economy was the underlying factor behind the USSR's decline, as the stagnating command economy created the long-term structural decay that left the country unable to sustain its ambitions. The vast military spending and external burdens, especially the war in Afghanistan, were contributing factors that intensified and accelerated this decline by diverting scarce resources away from productive sectors. Meanwhile, external pressure from Reagan, the loss of grip over Eastern Europe seen in Poland's Solidarity movement, and the paralysis of an ageing leadership under Brezhnev and Chernenko acted as trigger factors that exposed and worsened the USSR's inability to compete or reform. Hence, while a weak economy was the mainspring of decline, it was the interplay between economic stagnation, military over-commitment, external pressure, Eastern European opposition and leadership stagnation that made the USSR's decline before Gorbachev both deep-rooted and irreversible.</i>	[9-10]