

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2025 SECONDARY FOUR

CANDIDATE
NAME

CLASS

INDEX
NUMBER

HUMANITIES (HISTORY)

2261/02

Paper 2 The Making of the 20th Century Modern World, 1910s–
1991

22 August 2025
1 hour 50 minutes

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your name, class and index number on your question paper and all the work you hand in.
Write in dark blue or black pen.
Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Section A

Answer **all parts** of Question 1.

Section B

Answer **two** questions.

Before the start of the examination, detach the cover sheet at the back of your question paper and staple it on top of the writing paper provided.

Write all answers in this answer booklet and check that all writing sheets are properly fastened.
The number of marks is given in brackets [] at the end of each question or part question.

SECTION A: Source-Based Case Study

Question 1 is **compulsory** for all candidates.

Study the Background Information and the sources carefully and then answer **all** the questions.

You may use any of the sources to help you answer the questions, in addition to those sources you are told to use. In answering the questions, you should use your knowledge of the topic to help you interpret and evaluate the sources.

1. (a) Study Source A.

How useful is this source to understanding USA's policy after World War II? [5]
Explain your answer.

(b) Study Sources B and C.

How far does Source B prove Source C is wrong about causes of tension in [6]
post-war Europe? Explain your answer.

(c) Study Source D.

Does the cartoonist support the formation of NATO in 1949? Explain your [5]
answer.

(d) Study Source E.

How surprised are you by the source? Explain your answer. [6]

(e) Study **all** the sources.

'The Soviet Union was only trying to protect itself after World War II.' How far [8]
do the sources support this statement? Use the sources and your knowledge
to explain your answer.

How did the Soviet Union's actions affect the breakdown of wartime alliances in the post-war years?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Read this carefully. It may help you to answer some of the questions.

After World War II, the Soviet Union and the United States emerged as the two dominant superpowers, each seeking to shape the postwar world according to their own political and economic systems. Europe became the main battleground for their rivalry, as both powers aimed to expand their influence and secure their interests. The United States introduced the Truman Doctrine in 1947 to contain the spread of communism by supporting countries resisting Soviet pressure. This was followed by the Marshall Plan in 1948, which provided economic aid to rebuild Western Europe, and the formation of NATO in 1949 as a military alliance against potential Soviet aggression. In response, the Soviet Union launched its own initiatives such as Cominform in 1947 to coordinate communist parties, and COMECON in 1949 to strengthen economic ties among socialist states. These competing policies contributed to growing tensions and the division of Europe during the early Cold War years.

Were the actions by the Soviet Union a means to protect itself from the US aggression?

Source A: *A speech by Soviet Deputy Premier G. M. Malenkov in 1947.*

The ruling circles of the United States have embarked upon a policy of expansion, upon a policy of world domination, the aim of which is to impose the will of the United States on other independent countries. This policy finds its expression in the so-called 'Truman Doctrine' and the 'Marshall Plan'. These measures pursue the aim of establishing the domination of American imperialism in Europe. In this connection, the measures adopted by the Soviet Union are aimed at safeguarding the security of her state interests, and the maintenance of peace.

Source B: *A 1947 speech by President Truman to announce the Truman Doctrine.*

The Eastern European countries have recently had totalitarian regimes forced upon them against their will. The Government of the United States has made frequent protests against coercion and intimidation, in violation of the Yalta Agreement, in Poland, Rumania, and Bulgaria. Today, nearly every nation must choose between alternative ways of life. One way is based on the will of the majority, and is distinguished by free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty, freedom of speech and religion, and freedom from political oppression. The second way of life is based upon the will of a minority forcibly imposed upon the majority, relying upon terror and oppression. I believe it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples resisting Soviet control.

Source C: *A Soviet diplomat's view on American policies in 1947.*

The Soviet Government has consistently acted in the interests of maintaining peace and security in Europe. However, the recent policies pursued by certain Western powers, particularly the United States, have created new tensions and divisions. The Marshall Plan is not an aid program, but a political tool designed to extend American economic and political domination. The United States has established military alliances aimed at encircling the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union's measures are defensive, intended to protect its security and maintain peace in the face of these provocations.

Source D: *A cartoon published in an American newspaper in 1952, which shows a growling bear.*



Source E: *A 1946 telegram by U.S. diplomat George Kennan in Moscow, sent to American government officials and policymakers in Washington.*

At the bottom of the Kremlin's neurotic view of world affairs is the traditional and instinctive Russian sense of insecurity. They have always feared foreign penetration and real contact with the Western world. For this reason, they believe that there can be no peaceful coexistence with the capitalist world. They seek to weaken the power and influence of Western powers through patient, persistent pressure. In this situation, the United States must pursue a policy of firm containment, to block every expansionist move they make and to expose the falsities of Soviet propaganda. The greatest danger to the United States is not through military action but through internal disunity and lack of confidence in our institutions.

Source F: *An excerpt from the 1949 COMECON Declaration by the Soviet Union and its Eastern European members, setting out their plans after World War Two.*

This collaboration aims to foster economic development and improve the living standards of all member states. Through mutual assistance and solidarity, the countries seek to enhance their economic independence and stability. By working together, the member states can better navigate the challenges of the postwar global economy and reduce vulnerabilities that may arise from external pressures. This approach is designed to promote unity within the socialist community and support their shared goals of reconstruction and growth, ensuring sustainable progress while maintaining political and economic sovereignty.

SECTION B: Essays

Answer **two** questions.

2. 'The most beneficial of Hitler's policies between 1933 and 1939, to the people of Germany, were his economic policies.' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer. [10]
3. 'The main reason the Allies won the Second World War in Europe was due to the strength of the USA' How far do you agree with the statement? Explain your answer. [10]
4. 'The main reason that led to the victory of the Communists in the Vietnam War was the support of the Vietnamese people.' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer. [10]

End of paper

Copyright Acknowledgements

Source A: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/malenkov/1947/central-committee.htm>
Source B: <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/truman-doctrine>
Source C: https://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/2003/1/10/1a764b04-2068-4a44-97c5-38bd4e168fd1/publishable_en.pdf
Source D: https://coldwar.unc.edu/2018/06/soviet-aggression/?utm_source=chatgpt.com
Source E: <https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/document/21042-long-telegram-original>
Source F: <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/collection/67/cominform-and-comecon>

