

METHODIST GIRLS' SCHOOL

Founded in 1887



PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2025 Secondary 4

Humanities (History) Paper 2

Wednesday
27 August 2025

2261/02
1 hour 50 minutes

Levels of Response Marking Scheme (LORMS)

Section A: Source-Based Case Study

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

Was the Munich Agreement justified?

1 (a) Study Source A.

How useful is this source as evidence of the crisis in Czechoslovakia?
Explain your answer.

[5]

Level	Descriptor	Mark
L1	Answers based on undeveloped provenance <i>e.g., Source A is useful as it was from British Prime Minister's official declaration of peace.</i>	1
L2	Answers based on useful for what the source tells us OR not useful for what the source does not tell us about the issue Award the higher mark for both aspects [i.e., useful AND not useful]. <i>e.g., Source A is useful as it tells me that Chamberlain prioritised diplomacy over war. Source A states that "The settlement of the Czechoslovak problem which has now been achieved is, in my view, only the beginning of a larger settlement in which Europe may find peace", "This morning, I had another talk with Herr Hitler", and "We regard the agreement signed last night as symbolic of the desire of our two people to never go to war again." This implies that the crisis in Czechoslovakia had been resolved due to his negotiation with Hitler.</i> OR/AND <i>e.g., Source A is not useful/limited as it only represents the British position but not Czechoslovakia's position when the latter was directly involved in the Sudetenland crisis. Source A states that "We are resolved that consulting each other shall be the method used to deal with any other questions that may concern our two countries, and we are determined to continue our efforts to remove possible sources of difference". This shows that the negotiation did not involve Czechoslovakia that was directly involved in the crisis since its Sudetenland region was taken away from it. The gap in the evidence makes Source A not useful as it only represents Britain's and Germany's interests.</i>	2 -3

L4	Answers which attempt to evaluate usefulness for what is said by cross-reference to other sources or contextual knowledge/critical analysis of provenance [Answers which address just reliability and not utility should be given L2/2 marks.] Award 4 marks if supported by cross-reference OR contextual knowledge. Award 5 marks if supported by cross-reference AND contextual knowledge/critical analysis of provenance. <i>e.g., Source A is useful as evidence of the Czechoslovak crisis as it is reliable when cross-referenced with Source D, Chamberlain's Birmingham speech. Both sources consistently show how the British government viewed and presented the crisis as a diplomatic issue that could be resolved through negotiation rather than conflict. In Source A, Chamberlain emphasizes that "The settlement of the Czechoslovak problem which has now been achieved is, in my view, only the beginning of a larger settlement in which Europe may find peace." Similarly, in Source D, he reiterates this position by explaining his aim to "promote European appeasement" where "each nation should have fair opportunities." This consistency in Chamberlain's public statements helps us understand how Britain's faith in diplomatic solutions with Hitler shaped their handling of the crisis.</i> AND <i>However, Source A is not useful as the evidence is unreliable when cross-referenced to Source E, Former Czechoslovak President Beneš's private letter. While Chamberlain presents the Munich Agreement as a success in solving "the Czechoslovak problem," Beneš reveals the devastating reality that "France and Britain had chosen to sacrifice us" and that the agreement "solved nothing; it marked the beginning of further aggression—starting with Czechoslovakia" and was seen as "a disaster." This is a stark contrast between Chamberlain's declaration of success in solving the crisis in Czechoslovakia and Beneš's firsthand experience of betrayal and predictions of the larger crisis to come. Germany indeed seized all of Czechoslovakia by March 1939, proving Chamberlain's claims about a peaceful settlement were completely wrong, and thus not useful.</i> OR <i>While Source A is limited in representing Czechoslovakia's view, there is still some value/use as evidence of the circumstances in the 1930s that influenced Chamberlain's position of using diplomacy to solve the crisis. Chamberlain came from the generation that survived the first world war, and the British public sentiment then was war weary.</i>	4-5
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(b) Study Source B.

What is the cartoonist's message? Explain your answer.

[5]

Level (L)	Descriptor	Marks
L1	Source content/provenance <i>e.g., Source B shows Hitler as Santa bagging human gifts.</i>	1
L2	Sub-message Award the higher mark in the level for more developed answers. <i>e.g., Source B shows Hitler as an aggressor. The cartoonist depicts Hitler as Santa holding a bag labelled "Deutschland über Alles" (Germany above all) bagging young innocent children. The bedhead reads "ex French-British Family." This means that Hitler was causing tensions with France and Britain by taking away their former allies.</i>	2-3
L3	Main message of the source in context Award the higher mark in the level for message in context. <i>e.g., In the context of Hitler moving his forces into Czechoslovakia's Sudetenland in October 1938 due to the Munich Agreement, the cartoonist warns that appeasing Hitler would only encourage further aggression. The main message of the cartoon is that Hitler's territorial ambitions would not stop at just taking the Sudetenland, and that Britain and France were naively giving in to Hitler's demands of territories through appeasement. The cartoonist depicts Hitler as Santa holding a bag labelled "Deutschland über Alles" (Germany above all), suggesting his ultimate goal was German domination in Europe, not just protecting ethnic Germans as he claimed. The "ex-French-British Family" label on the bed shows how Britain and France were allowing themselves to be taken advantage of through their policy of appeasement.</i>	4-5

(c) Study Sources D and C.

Does Source D prove Source C wrong? Explain your answer?

[6]

Level	Descriptor	Mark
L1	Answers based on undeveloped provenance <i>e.g., Source D proves Source C wrong as Source D is from Chamberlain, Britain's Prime Minister then while Source C is from Churchill, a Member of the British Parliament.</i> OR <i>e.g., Source D cannot prove Source C wrong as both are from Britain.</i>	1
L2	Answers based on agreement, so Source D cannot prove Source C wrong OR disagreement, so Source D can Source C wrong Award the higher mark for more developed answers or both aspects. <i>e.g., Source D proves Source C wrong as they differ in terms of the effectiveness of the Munich Agreement. In Source C, Churchill criticises the Munich Agreement's peace talk by condemning it to be ineffective. Source C states that "What is left of Czechoslovakia cannot be maintained as an independent country" and "This is only the first sip, the first foretaste of a bitter cup which will be given to us year by year unless by a supreme recovery of moral health and military vigour, we arise again and take our stand for freedom." Churchill claims that the peace talk was a failure as it did not benefit Czechoslovakia since its sovereignty was violated. In contrast, Chamberlain in Source D justified that the Munich Agreement succeeded in its immediate aim of averting a war, "sparing countless families from the tragedy of war." Chamberlain defended appeasement as the immediate Sudetenland crisis did bring peace initially to Czechoslovakia. Thus, Source D proves Source C wrong about the short-term consequences of appeasement.</i> OR <i>e.g., Source D cannot prove Source C wrong as both sources are similar in showing Hitler's ambitions in territorial expansion. In Source D, Chamberlain's speech from March 1939 attempts to defend appeasement by stating that "It has been claimed that my visit to Germany in 1938 caused the occupation of Czechoslovakia two days ago. However, I reject that claim." Similarly, in Source C, Churchill's speech from October 1938, warns that "Czechoslovakia will be engulfed in the Nazi regime." Therefore, Chamberlain's justification in Source D validates Churchill's warnings in Source C. The fact that Chamberlain had to defend his actions after Czechoslovakia's complete occupation demonstrates that Churchill's predictions about Hitler's expansionist intentions were correct. Thus, Source D cannot prove Source C wrong.</i>	2-3

L3	Answers based on cross-reference to contextual knowledge to decide whether Source D can prove Source C wrong. Award the higher mark for more developed answers or both aspects. <i>e.g., [As L2 plus] Source D proves Source C wrong as they differ in terms of the effectiveness of the Munich Agreement. In Source C, In Source C, Churchill criticises the Munich Agreement's peace talk by condemning it to be ineffective. Source C states that "What is left of Czechoslovakia cannot be maintained as an independent country" and "This is only the first sip, the first foretaste of a bitter cup which will be given to us year by year unless by a supreme recovery of moral health and military vigour, we arise again and take our stand for freedom." Churchill claims that the peace talk was a failure as it did not benefit Czechoslovakia since its sovereignty was violated. In contrast, Chamberlain in Source D justified that the Munich Agreement succeeded in its immediate aim of averting a war, "sparing countless families from the tragedy of war." This more optimistic view is supported by Source A, where Chamberlain presents the agreement as "the beginning of a larger settlement in which Europe may find peace." Chamberlain defended appeasement as the immediate Sudetenland crisis did bring peace initially to Czechoslovakia. Thus, Source D proves Source C wrong about the short-term consequences of appeasement.</i> OR <i>e.g., [As L2 plus] Source D cannot prove Source C wrong as both sources are similar in showing Hitler's ambitions in territorial expansion. In Source D, Chamberlain's speech from March 1939 attempts to defend appeasement by stating that "It has been claimed that my visit to Germany in 1938 caused the occupation of Czechoslovakia two days ago. However, I reject that claim." Similarly, in Source C, Churchill's speech from October 1938, warns that "Czechoslovakia will be engulfed in the Nazi regime." Source E confirms/corroborates with Source C as it reveals that even the former leader of Czechoslovakia, Beneš, saw the Munich Agreement as "the beginning of further aggression starting with Czechoslovakia." Therefore, Chamberlain's justification in Source D validates Churchill's warnings in Source C. The fact that Chamberlain had to defend his actions after Czechoslovakia's complete occupation demonstrates that Churchill's predictions about Hitler's expansionist intentions were correct. Thus, Source D cannot prove Source C wrong.</i>	4-5
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L4	L3 + Answers based on evaluation of Source C or Source D to decide whether Source D can prove Source C wrong e.g., [As L3 plus] Source D cannot prove Source C wrong due to the timing and positions of the speakers. Source C is a warning given in Parliament when Hitler occupied Sudetenland in October 1938 before seizing the rest of Czechoslovakia, revealing Churchill's foresight about Hitler's true intentions. Churchill was a strong critic who opposed the appeasement policy. Source D, however, is a defensive speech delivered after Germany had already seized the rest of Czechoslovakia in March 1939, showing Chamberlain attempting to justify his failed policy. Churchill's prediction was accurate as on 15 March 1939, Germany seized the rest of Czechoslovakia. Furthermore, Source D's credibility is undermined by its defensive nature. Chamberlain claims his actions were "widely applauded at the time" and aimed to "preserve peace," but this contradicts the reality shown in other sources. The fact that Chamberlain had to defend his actions after Czechoslovakia's complete occupation demonstrates that Churchill's predictions about Hitler's expansionist intentions were correct. Thus, Source D cannot prove Source C wrong.	6
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(d) Study Sources E and F.

Does Source F make Source E surprising? Explain your answer?

[6]

Level	Descriptor	Mark
L1	Answers based on undeveloped provenance <i>e.g., Source F makes Source E surprising as Source F is from a historian while Source E is a firsthand account from a former President of Czechoslovakia.</i>	1
L2	Surprised OR Not Surprised based on agreement OR disagreement of the content of Sources E and F Award the higher mark for more developed answers or both aspects. <i>e.g., Source F makes Source E surprising as they differ on the reasons behind Chamberlain's appeasement of Hitler. Source E portrays Chamberlain's actions as being driven by "ignorance, misunderstanding, and egoism," suggesting personal failings. However, Source F surprisingly reveals that Britain's decisions to keep military spending low were driven by calculated economic concerns due to the Great Depression and fear of "Communist Russia", not personal shortcomings. Thus, Source F challenges Source E, making Source E surprising by revealing that Britain's actions were driven by economic pragmatism rather than Source E's claims about Chamberlain's personal failings, isolation, and anti-Communist sentiment.</i> OR <i>e.g., Source F does not make Source E surprising as they are similar in the outcomes of appeasement. Source E predicts "further aggression—starting with Czechoslovakia, then Romania, Ukraine, Poland." Similarly, Source F states "Germany's growing aggression and rearmament." This confirms that appeasement did not stop Hitler from territorial expansion. Thus, Source F does not make Source E surprising as both agree that appeasement was ineffective in satisfying Hitler's demands since he lied, leading to territorial expansion and World War II.</i>	2-3
L3	L2 + Surprised OR Not Surprised based on cross-reference to other sources or contextual knowledge Award the higher mark for more developed answers or both aspects. <i>e.g., Source F makes Source E surprising as they differ on the reasons behind Chamberlain's appeasement of Hitler. Source E portrays Chamberlain's actions as being driven by "ignorance, misunderstanding, and egoism," suggesting personal failings. However, Source F surprisingly reveals that Britain's decisions to keep military spending low were driven by</i>	4-5

	calculated economic concerns due to the Great Depression and fear of "Communist Russia", not personal shortcomings. Source F is further supported by Source D, where Chamberlain explains that his actions were meant to "promote European appeasement" and give nations "fair opportunities to develop its resources, trade internationally." Thus, Source D validates Source F in challenging Source E, making Source E surprising by revealing that Britain's actions were driven by economic pragmatism rather than Source E's claims about Chamberlain's personal failings, isolation, and anti-Communist sentiment. OR e.g., Source F does not make Source E surprising as they are similar in the outcomes of appeasement. Source E predicts "further aggression—starting with Czechoslovakia, then Romania, Ukraine, Poland." Similarly, Source F states "Germany's growing aggression and rearmament." This confirms that appeasement did not stop Hitler from territorial expansion. In Source D, Chamberlain even acknowledges that "It has been claimed that my visit to Germany in 1938 caused the occupation of Czechoslovakia two days ago." On 15 March 1939, Germany did invade the rest of Czechoslovakia. Thus, Source F does not make Source E surprising as both agree that appeasement was ineffective in satisfying Hitler's demands since he lied, leading to territorial expansion and World War II.	
L4	L3 + Answers based on a critical analysis and evaluation of Source F's or Source E's provenance e.g., [As L3 plus] While Sources E and F differ on Chamberlain's motivations, Source F does not make Source E surprising when considering the historical contexts that shape their perspectives. Source E, a private letter from Beneš written in exile in 1938, reflects his direct bitter experience as Czechoslovakia's president during the crisis. His criticism of Chamberlain's "ignorance" and "egoism" stems from witnessing the public face of British policy. Source F, a historian's analysis, with access to archives, reveals hidden economic motivations that Beneš had no access to. Rather than contradicting Beneš's observations in Source E, Source F's economic explanation helps explain what Beneš's witnessed, thus making Source E not surprising.	6

(e) Study all the sources.

‘The Munich Agreement was justified.’ How far do these sources support this view? Use the sources and your knowledge to explain your answer. [8]

Level	Descriptor	Mark
1	Writes about hypothesis, no valid source use <i>e.g., The Munich Agreement was justified as there was temporary peace in Czechoslovakia.</i>	1
2	Yes OR No, supported by valid source use Award 2 marks for one Y or N supported by valid source use, and an additional mark for each subsequent valid source use up to a maximum of 4 marks. <i>e.g., Source A supports the view as Chamberlain as his main concern was to secure peace for Europe. He claimed that “The settlement of the Czechoslovak problem which has now been achieved” and “We regard the agreement signed last night as symbolic of the desire of our two people to never go to war again.” The Munich Agreement was justified in his view as there was at least peace for the rest of Czechoslovakia at that point in time when he gave in to Hitler’s demand for the Sudetenland region.</i> OR <i>e.g., Source B does NOT support the view as Hitler would not stop at annexing the Sudetenland region of Czechoslovakia in October 1938. Source B shows Hitler depicted as Santa Claus kidnapping more children representing the territories. The bag states “Germany above all.” Thus, the Munich Agreement was not justified as the cartoonist mocked/satirised it as a naïve appeasement that would only embolden Hitler’s expansionist ambitions to conquer more territories and agitating war with Britain and France that led to World War II.</i>	2-4
3	Yes AND No, supported by valid source use Award 5 marks for one Y and N supported by valid source use, and an additional mark for each subsequent valid source use up to a maximum of 7 marks. 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. - Accept any plausible L2’s or L3’s valid source use and (+1/+1) CK up to 2 marks in the following: - e.g., L2 (+1) CK, and/or L3 (+1) CK	5-8

Level	Descriptor		Mark
3	Support	Not Support	5-8
	A, D, and F	B, C, E, and F	
	As L2 plus] [CK+1m] e.g., While Source A supports the view, it is not sufficient. It does not reveal Chamberlain's awareness of the potential threat posed by Hitler. While Britain adopted the appeasement policy, Chamberlain authorised massive spending on rearmament for Britain. Source D supports the view as Chamberlain argued that it was necessary due to Britain's Hitler's assurance and peace was preserved for Czechoslovakia then. He claimed that he "went in a desperate effort to avert a European war—a move widely applauded at the time. Hitler assured me that the Sudetenland was his final territorial demand, and that Germany had no further interest in Czechoslovakia", "At that moment, peace was preserved in Czechoslovakia and Europe", and "to promote European appeasement" where "each nation should have fair opportunities to develop its resources, trade internationally." This implies that the Munich Agreement was justified then as by appeasing Hitler, it averted a war so that Europe could focus on a fair development of resources and economic growth. Source F supports the view as the Munich Agreement bought time for Britain to prepare for war and to build up its economy. Source F states that "Chamberlain claimed that Britain was unprepared for war in 1938." This reveals that the Munich Agreement was effective then as it gave time for Britain to rearm.	e.g., [As L2 plus] Source C does NOT support the view. Churchill argued that the Munich Agreement only encouraged Hitler's aggressive foreign policy. Source C states that "What is left of Czechoslovakia cannot be maintained as an independent country. In months to come, Czechoslovakia will be engulfed in the Nazi regime. Do not suppose that this is the end. This is only the first sip, the first foretaste of a bitter cup which will be given to us year by year. This means that the Munich Agreement was not justified as it was ineffective in satisfying Hitler's territorial demands. Source E does NOT support the view as Czechoslovakia's sovereignty was violated when its Sudetenland region was annexed. Source E states that "Chamberlain, the British Prime Minister, opposed war due to ignorance, misunderstanding, and egoism", "when news came that the great powers would meet in Munich, it became clear that France and Britain had chosen to sacrifice us" and "The Munich Agreement solved nothing; it marked the beginning of further aggression—starting with Czechoslovakia, then Romania, Ukraine, Poland, etc.—if the Allies continued to abandon us and resisting Germany." Thus, the Munich Agreement was not justified as it was ineffective, leading to Hitler's territorial expansion and set the stage for World War II. [CK+1m] e.g., Although Source E does not support the view, it is not reliable. The former President of Czechoslovakia was not consulted	

Level	Descriptor		Mark
3	Support	Not Support	5-8
	A, D, and F	B, C, D, and F	
		<i>at the Munich Conference that resulted in the loss of the Sudetenland region to Germany in exchange for the pledge of peace from Hitler. Thus, the former President Beneš was aggrieved at the outcome. His criticism of Chamberlain being “opposed to war due to ignorance, misunderstanding, and egoism” was not entirely true. Chamberlain was in fact very aware of the potential threat posed by Hitler and was appeasing Hitler to buy time for rearmament for Britain.</i> <i>Source F does NOT support the view as the historian claims that there were real alternatives then. Source F states that “Germany could not have defeated the combined forces of Britain, France, and Czechoslovakia at the time. Britain’s repeated concessions were not due to military weakness or pacifist public opinion, but economic concerns” and “British leaders kept military spending low and used this as an excuse to ignore Germany’s growing aggression and rearmament.” This reveals that the Munich Agreement was not justified as the British and French misjudged Hitler’s ambitions and Germany’s military readiness for war.</i>	

Section B: Essays

Answer **two** questions.

- 2 'Japan's expansionist foreign policy was the main reason for the outbreak of World War II in the Asia-Pacific.' 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., Japan's expansionism was not purely ideological but also driven by urgent economic and political needs. The actions of the United States, also contributed to the outbreak of war. While U.S. sanctions were aimed at halting Japanese aggression, they also cornered Japan into a position where war appeared to be the only viable alternative.</i> <i>e.g., Japan's expansionist foreign policy was a fundamental driver behind the outbreak of World War II in the Asia-Pacific. The rise of Japanese militarism and ultranationalism in the 1930s promoted the belief that Japan had a divine right to lead Asia and acquire an empire. This ideology justified aggressive conquests, beginning with the invasion of Manchuria in 1931, followed by a full-scale war against China in 1937.</i> <i>e.g., A further counterargument lies in the actions of the United States, which contributed to the outbreak of war. While U.S. sanctions were aimed at halting Japanese aggression, they also cornered Japan into a position where war appeared to be the only viable alternative. The embargo on oil, the freezing of Japanese assets, and the demand for Japan's withdrawal from China and Indochina were perceived as threats to Japan's survival and honour.</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., Japan's expansionist foreign policy was a fundamental driver behind the outbreak of World War II in the Asia-Pacific. The rise of Japanese militarism and ultranationalism in the 1930s promoted the belief that Japan had a divine right to lead Asia and acquire an empire. This ideology justified aggressive conquests, beginning with the invasion of Manchuria in 1931, followed by a full-scale war against China in 1937. Japan's domestic economic struggles also contributed to its expansionist policy. The Great Depression</i>	4-5

	devastated Japan's export-driven economy. Protectionist tariffs from the United States and other Western nations made economic recovery through trade nearly impossible. Ultrationalists viewed democratic politicians as weak and ineffective in solving these crises, which led to the military's increasing dominance in government. The army promoted conquest as the only solution to Japan's problems, especially by securing control over territories that could provide essential resources. Therefore, Japan's expansionism was not purely ideological but also driven by urgent economic and political needs. Military leaders saw territorial expansion as essential to secure access to raw materials such as coal, iron, and oil, which Japan lacked. The conquest of resource-rich regions like Manchuria and later French Indochina was therefore viewed as necessary for self-sufficiency. These actions, justified under the rhetoric of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, placed Japan on a direct collision course with Western powers, especially the United States. As Japan continued its aggressive expansion, war became increasingly inevitable. e.g., Additionally, Japan's foreign policy deliberately rejected international diplomacy. The League of Nations' condemnation of Japan's invasion of Manchuria in 1932 did not deter further aggression; instead, Japan withdrew from the League in 1933 and pursued its ambitions more boldly. The military's defiance of civilian leadership, such as when it ignored orders to withdraw from Shanghai, showed how foreign policy was dictated by ultranationalist military commanders rather than moderated politicians. The failure of the international community to impose meaningful sanctions, due in part to their economic concerns and fear of conflict, further emboldened Japan. With each successful territorial acquisition, Japan's confidence and belief in a militaristic path to empire grew, accelerating the path toward war.	
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, Japan's worsening relationship with the United States was also a significant factor that escalated tensions and led directly to war. Japan's invasion of China in 1937 drew strong criticism from the United States, which began providing financial and military aid to the Chinese Nationalist government. Diplomatic relations further deteriorated after Japan joined the Tripartite Pact with Germany and Italy in 1940, signalling its alignment with Axis powers. These developments deeply alarmed the United States, which responded by gradually escalating economic pressure. In 1940, the U.S. imposed an embargo on exports of iron and steel to Japan, followed by a full oil embargo in August 1941. Since Japan depended heavily on imported oil—nearly 90% from the U.S.—these sanctions threatened to paralyse its military and industrial capacity. Faced with economic strangulation, Japan's leaders saw	6-8

	war as the only option to secure vital resources and preserve national prestige. <i>e.g., [As L2 plus] A further counterargument lies in the actions of the United States, which contributed to the outbreak of war. While U.S. sanctions were aimed at halting Japanese aggression, they also cornered Japan into a position where war appeared to be the only viable alternative. The embargo on oil, the freezing of Japanese assets, and the demand for Japan's withdrawal from China and Indochina were perceived as threats to Japan's survival and honour. Japan's leaders believed that acceding to U.S. demands would reverse years of imperial gains and undermine morale. U.S. strategic missteps—such as underestimating Japan's willingness to strike and failing to secure Pearl Harbour—further created an opportunity for Japan's pre-emptive attack.</i>	
	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, Japan's expansionist foreign policy was the underlying factor that set the direction towards conflict by creating long-term ideological, economic, and strategic motives for war. Japan's internal economic crisis and the rise of militarism were contributing factors that intensified and accelerated the push for conquest. However, it was the trigger factor—the decisive U.S. oil embargo and financial sanctions in 1941—that transformed tensions into open conflict. The final decision to launch a pre-emptive strike on Pearl Harbor was directly linked to the collapse of U.S.-Japan diplomacy. Hence, while Japan's expansionism provided the foundational cause for war, it was the interplay with U.S. actions, particularly the embargo, that acted as the immediate catalyst. The outbreak of World War II in the Asia-Pacific was therefore the result of both deep-rooted expansionist ambitions and external pressures that provoked Japan into war.</i>	9-10

- 3 'The communists won the Vietnam War because of support from the local population.' 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., One of the key reasons the communists won the Vietnam War was their strong support from the local population, particularly in rural areas. However, the American use of chemical warfare deeply alienated the local population and undermined any attempt to win "hearts and minds."</i> <i>e.g., One of the key reasons the communists won the Vietnam War was their strong support from the local population, particularly in rural areas. This support enabled the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) and the Viet Cong to operate effectively as guerrilla forces. The guerilla fighters built and maintained an extensive underground tunnel network, such as the Cu Chi tunnels, stretching over 250 kilometres. These tunnels allowed them to launch ambushes, store supplies, and even conduct surgeries while avoiding detection.</i> <i>e.g., The American use of chemical warfare deeply alienated the local population and undermined any attempt to win "hearts and minds." In their attempt to root out Viet Cong fighters hidden in the dense jungles, the US launched massive "Search and Destroy" missions. These missions aimed to flush out and kill insurgents but often ended up destroying entire villages suspected of harbouring the enemy.</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., One of the key reasons the communists won the Vietnam War was their strong support from the local population, particularly in rural areas. This support enabled the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) and the Viet Cong to operate effectively as guerrilla forces. The guerilla fighters built and maintained an extensive underground tunnel network, such as the Cu Chi tunnels, stretching over 250 kilometres. These tunnels allowed them to launch ambushes, store supplies, and even conduct surgeries while avoiding detection. The US and South Vietnamese armies struggled to identify the enemy, as Viet Cong fighters often disguised themselves as civilians. Civilians also often provided food, shelter, and crucial intelligence about American and South Vietnamese troop movements. Many Vietnamese viewed Ho Chi Minh and the</i>	4-5

	<i>communist movement as patriotic, especially since they had resisted both French and Japanese occupation. This contributed to the high morale of the communists that gave them a political will to remove the American forces. Communist land reform policies in the North, although harsh, also won favour among the peasantry, as land was confiscated from landlords and redistributed to farmers. This popular backing allowed the Viet Cong to conduct hit-and-run attacks and disappear into a protective civilian population, frustrating US forces and undermining conventional military superiority that eventually led to their withdrawal of troops and paved the way for communist victory.</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] However, the American use of chemical warfare deeply alienated the local population and undermined any attempt to win “hearts and minds.” In their attempt to root out Viet Cong fighters hidden in the dense jungles, the US launched massive “Search and Destroy” missions. These missions aimed to flush out and kill insurgents but often ended up destroying entire villages suspected of harbouring the enemy. Two notorious chemical weapons were widely used: napalm and Agent Orange. Napalm, a highly flammable jelly-like substance, caused horrific burns and destroyed entire forested areas. Agent Orange, a toxic herbicide, was used to defoliate jungles but had devastating long-term health consequences, including cancer, birth defects, and environmental ruin. These actions not only failed to eliminate the Viet Cong but turned many civilians against the United States and its South Vietnamese allies. Instead of isolating the insurgents, they strengthened the communists’ claim that they were fighting a brutal foreign invader. All these gave the communists the upper hand to win the war.</i> <i>e.g., [As L2 plus] However, another critical factor contributing to the communist victory was the mounting weaknesses of the US military campaign. Despite overwhelming technological and financial superiority, the US failed to defeat an enemy that relied on guerrilla tactics and local terrain. This became most apparent during the 1968 Tet Offensive, when 80,000 communist troops launched coordinated attacks on over 100 South Vietnamese cities. Although the US repelled the attacks militarily, the scale and surprise of the offensive shattered the illusion that America was winning the war. The Tet Offensive marked a turning point, not on the battlefield, but in public perception, as media coverage turned increasingly critical. Graphic reporting, particularly from journalists like Walter Cronkite, led to a dramatic decline in public support for the war effort in the United States. This shift in sentiment accelerated the policy of Vietnamisation under President Nixon, whereby the US gradually withdrew troops and transferred combat responsibility to the South</i>	6-8

	<i>Vietnamese Army. However, the ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam) lacked morale, leadership, and training to match the North's determination and support. In contrast, the communists also had strong support from China and the USSR that provided crucial military aid, equipment, and training. This allowed the North Vietnamese to sustain a long war against a superpower. As American forces pulled out and financial aid declined, the South Vietnamese regime was left exposed. Without American backing, it could not withstand the final Northern offensive in 1975, which culminated in the fall of Saigon.</i>	
	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, support from the local population was a vital factor, but not the sole or most decisive one. The US military's strategic and moral failures, the psychological impact of the Tet Offensive, negative media coverage, and the eventual withdrawal through Vietnamisation were more decisive. Local support and foreign military backing gave the communists staying power, but it was the disintegration of American commitment that ultimately sealed their victory.</i>	9-10

- 4 'The Soviet Union's weak economy was the main reason for the loss of its influence over the Warsaw Pact members in 1989.' 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 fundamentally underpinned the USSR's loss of influence over Eastern Europe by 1989. Furthermore, the economic strain was worsened by external burdens such as the Soviet-Afghan War in 1979.</i> <i>e.g., The weaknesses of the Soviet economy fundamentally underpinned the USSR's loss of influence over Eastern Europe by 1989. From the late 1970s, the Soviet command economy experienced stagnation, with industrial and agricultural output growth sharply declining. As economic hardships intensified, resentment grew in countries like Poland and Hungary, where living standards were deteriorating.</i> <i>Furthermore, the economic strain was worsened by external burdens such as the Soviet-Afghan War in 1979. Soviet troops entered Afghanistan to maintain the power of the pro-Soviet government there, but they were tied down to the next 10 years by Afghan fighters. To matters worse for the USSR, the Mujahideen knew their territory, had plenty of experience in guerilla warfare, and were supplied with weapons and money by the United States of America and Saudi Arabia. The USSR invested far too much in its military power, especially the nuclear weapons programme.</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 fundamentally underpinned the USSR's loss of influence over Eastern Europe by 1989. From the late 1970s, the Soviet command economy experienced stagnation, with industrial and agricultural output growth sharply declining. This economic decline limited the USSR's ability to maintain subsidies to Eastern European satellite states and weakened its capacity to enforce political control. As economic hardships intensified, resentment grew in countries like Poland and Hungary, where living standards were deteriorating. These economic struggles, closely tied to Soviet support, led to growing public unrest and demands for reform. Consequently, economic stagnation in the USSR had a cascading effect,</i>	4-5

	eroding the legitimacy of communist regimes in Eastern Europe and weakening Moscow's grip over its satellite states. e.g., Furthermore, the economic strain was worsened by external burdens such as the Soviet-Afghan War in 1979. Soviet troops entered Afghanistan to maintain the power of the pro-Soviet government there, but they were tied down to the next 10 years by Afghan fighters known as the Mujahideen. The Mujahideen saw themselves fighting against the communist regime. To matters worse for the USSR, the Mujahideen knew their territory, had plenty of experience in guerilla warfare, and were supplied with weapons and money by the United States of America and Saudi Arabia. The USSR invested far too much in its military power, especially the nuclear weapons programme. It was estimated that 30 to 50 per cent of Soviet resources went to the military. This economic strain made its alliance with Eastern Europe through Comecon weaker. Thus, as the USSR struggled, so did some of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe that were very dependent on Soviet support. This weakening economic foundation made it harder for the USSR to sustain their dominance over Eastern Europe.	
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, the Soviet Union's waning control over Eastern Europe was not solely due to its weak economy. Gorbachev's political and foreign policy reforms played a crucial role in triggering the collapse of communist regimes. His policy of Glasnost encouraged open discussion and criticism, exposing the failures of communism and inspiring dissident movements. Simultaneously, his Sinatra Doctrine—a shift from the Brezhnev Doctrine—announced that Eastern Bloc nations could determine their own paths without fear of Soviet intervention. This removal of the threat of force empowered opposition movements, like Solidarity in Poland, to mobilize and demand political change, ultimately leading to the collapse of regimes across the region. Gorbachev's deliberate non-interventionist stance made the USSR lose credibility over Eastern European states as that led to the collapse of communism in 1989. Many Eastern European states began to agitate for independence from the geopolitical influence of the USSR in 1989. e.g., [As L2 plus] In addition, the role of people power and ideological disillusionment cannot be ignored. Decades of repression, censorship, and poor living conditions had generated deep dissatisfaction among the populations of Eastern Europe. By the 1980s, this discontent manifested in mass protests, strikes, and civil resistance, such as the fall of the Berlin Wall and Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia. The ideological appeal of communism had eroded, especially when compared with the freedoms and prosperity of the West, which citizens accessed increasingly through media and travel.	6-8

	<i>Thus, it was not merely economic hardship but a broad rejection of Soviet-style communism that drove Eastern Europe to abandon Soviet influence and seek alternative influence.</i>	
	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, while the weak Soviet economy was a foundational and long-term cause of its loss of influence, it was not the sole or most immediate trigger. Gorbachev's reformist policies and the withdrawal of military backing for communist regimes were decisive in accelerating the collapse. The combination of economic decay, political reform, and public resistance created led to the fall of Soviet dominance in Eastern Europe by 1989. Therefore, the economic factor was essential but must be viewed in conjunction with political and ideological factors to fully explain the loss of Soviet influence over Eastern Europe by 1989.</i>	9-10