

The origins and development of the Cold War



Candidates will study the following content and the differing interpretations that historians have produced, with a particular focus on the overarching key question, 'Who was to blame for the Cold War?'

Key Content:

This topic covers the following events and developments in the evolution of the Cold War in Europe, 1941–50

- Tensions in the wartime alliance against the Axis powers
- Peace-making at the end of the Second World War
- Increasing tensions in a divided Europe
- The Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan
- The Berlin Blockade and Airlift

Key Approaches:

Candidates should explore the following issues through the interpretations and approaches of different historians:

- How far were inherent tensions between East and West bound to resurface in 1945?
- How important were the personalities of the leaders of the Great Powers in shaping the Cold War?
- How far were ideology, security and economics the factors which created Cold War tensions?
- The Traditional approach
- The Revisionist approach
- Post-Revisionist approaches
- How have the perspectives on the Cold War of Russian historians differed from those in the West?
- Reinterpretations of the Cold War in the light of new archival sources
- The emergence of the 'New' Cold War history