



UNDERGRADUATE UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS

SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF EDUCATION ARTS

HIS 422: HISTORY OF UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC (USSR)

DATE: 7TH APRIL 2026

DURATION: 2 HOURS

MAXIMUM MARKS: 70

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Write your registration number on the answer booklet.
2. **DO NOT** write on this question paper.
3. This paper contains **SIX (6)** questions.
4. Question **ONE** is compulsory.
5. Answer any other **THREE** questions.
6. Question **ONE** carries **25 MARKS** and the rest carry **15 MARKS** each.
7. **Write all your answers in the Examination answer booklet provided.**

QUESTION ONE

Read the Case Study below carefully and answer the questions that follow:

The Soviet Union's roots lay in the October Revolution of 1917. The new government, led by Vladimir Lenin, established the Russian SFSR, the world's first constitutionally socialist state. The revolution was not accepted by all within the Russian Republic, resulting in the Russian Civil War. The Russian SFSR and its subordinate republics were merged into the Soviet Union in 1922. Following Lenin's death in 1924, Joseph Stalin came to power, inaugurating rapid industrialization and forced collectivization that led to significant economic growth but contributed to a famine between 1930 and 1933 that killed millions. The Soviet forced labour camp system of the Gulag was expanded.

During the late 1930s, Stalin's government conducted the Great Purge to remove opponents, resulting in mass death, imprisonment, and deportation. In 1939, the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany signed a nonaggression pact, but in 1941, Germany invaded the Soviet Union in the largest land invasion in history, opening the Eastern Front of World War II.

The Soviets played a decisive role in defeating the Axis powers, suffering an estimated 27 million casualties, which accounted for most Allied losses. In the aftermath of the war, the Soviet Union consolidated the territory occupied by the Red Army, forming satellite states, and undertook rapid economic development which cemented its status as a superpower.

During its existence, the Soviet Union produced many significant social and technological achievements and innovations. It had the world's second-largest economy and largest standing military. An NPT-designated state, it wielded the largest arsenal of nuclear weapons in the world.

As an Allied nation, it was a founding member of the United Nations as well as one of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. Before its dissolution, the Soviet Union was one of the world's two superpowers through its hegemony in Eastern Europe, global diplomatic and ideological influence (particularly in the Global South), military and economic strengths, and scientific accomplishments

Required:

- a) Account for the decline of Eastern European Empire of Byzantine. **(10 marks)**
- b) Discuss the significance of Russo-Japanese war to the collapse of Russian empire. **(9 marks)**
- c) Assess the main trigger events of 1905 Russian Revolution. **(6 marks)**

QUESTION TWO

- a) Examine political changes after the 1917 Russian Revolution. **(9 marks)**
- b) Explain importance of the following leaders in Russian Revolution that ushered in Soviet Union: Vladimir Lenin, Nicholas II and Leon Trotsky. **(6 marks)**

QUESTION THREE

- a) Examine reasons for Bolsheviks opposition to Russia's participation in the First World War. **(8 marks)**
- b) Assess Socio-economic consequences of Russia's participation in World War 1. **(7 marks)**

QUESTION FOUR

- a) Analyze major reasons for Germany's failure to defeat Soviet Union in WWII. **(10 marks)**
- b) Illustrate basic tenets of Marxism. **(5 marks)**

QUESTION FIVE

- a) Explain main disagreements that emerged between the leaders of Soviet Union, Germany and US towards the end of WWII. **(5 marks)**
- b) Evaluate main aims for the formation of Warsaw Pact. **(10 marks)**

QUESTION SIX

- a) Account for the key events leading to the end of Cold war. **(6 marks)**
- b) Discuss the role played by Boris Yeltsin in the disintegration of USSR. **(9 marks)**