

Unit 2: Russia 1917-39 - key words. You need to be able to use these terms with confidence in the exam.

Term	Definition
Abdicate	Give up political power (usually by the ruler of a country).
Agricultural production	Crops and animals grown and raise by farmers.
Autocracy	Rule by one person who has complete power.
Bourgeois	To do with the middle classes (for example doctors, teachers).
Bureaucracy	Groups of officials who carry out government orders and run the country.
Capital punishment	Punishing crime by executing the criminal.
Capitalist	A person who owns land or factories and makes their money not by working but by selling what workers on the land or in the factories produce.
Censorship	Telling the media what they can or cannot print or say.
Civil war	War between groups of people in the same country.
Collective	Where everyone who works lives in one place follows a set of rules drawn up by the group.
Communes	Groups that run themselves.
Communism	A system where everyone is equal, the state owns everything and provides everything that people need.
Conscripted	Forced to join the armed services.
Counter-revolution	A revolution to overturn a recent revolution (either to replace the system the first revolution overthrew or to replace it with a third system).
Coup d'état	Violently overthrowing a government.
Cheka	The Bolshevik secret police until 1922, who had special powers to arrest and imprison without trial.
Constituent Assembly	The govt set up by the Provisional Govt after the February Revolution of 1917, and elected under Bolshevik Rule after the October Revolution of 1917.
Council of People's Commissars (CPC)	The group that ran the early Bolshevik Government.
Gosplan	The State Planning Committee that ran the Five-Year Plans.
Kulak	Better of peasants who had benefited from Lenin's New Economic Policy.
Martial law	When the normal government is replaced (usually in an emergency) by rule by the army.
Mass production	Making goods that have standardised parts (for example, the same sized bolts) to make them quicker and cheaper to produce.
Mutinied	Refused to obey the orders of those in command, usually in the armed services.
Political commissar	An official under the Bolshevik government, in charge of making sure important groups (such as the army) stay loyal.
Purge	The removal of enemies through terror.
Provisional Government	The government of Russia from the abdication of the Tsar (2 March 1917) to the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks (25 October 1917).
Propaganda	Giving information, true or false, to make people think or behave in a particular way.
Military Revolutionary Committee	The part of the Petrograd Soviet that deal with organising armed support (in the army and elsewhere) for the October Revolution of 1917.
NKVD	Name of secret police under Stalin.
New Economic Policy (NEP)	Introduced in 1921 by Lenin to win back support of people. Allowed private businesses and farms and profit.

Okhrana	The Tsar's secret police, who had special powers to arrest and imprison without trial.
Sabotage	Deliberately destroying or damaging something in a factory or other workplace.
Secret ballot	Voting secretly.
Soviet	An elected council of workers.
Social inequality	Where people are not equal, some are rich, some are poor.
Revolution	A sudden or drastic change in a society's political, economic structures.
Red Army	The army of the Bolshevik, later Communist, government.
Red Guard	The workers' fighting units set up by the Bolsheviks.
Tsar	The title of the Ruler of Russia until 1917.