Option D: The Cold War 1945–1991

Content Focus

Students investigate key features in the history of the Cold War 1945–1991. The Historical concepts and skills content is to be integrated as appropriate.

Key features
- origins and developments of the Cold War
- influence of the ideologies of communism and capitalism on the Cold War
- origins and nature of détente, and its impact on the Cold War
- changing policies, strategies and responses to the Cold War
- impact of crises on changing superpower relations
- the arms race and disarmament
- reasons for the end of the Cold War

Content

Students investigate:

Survey
- Origins of the Cold War 1945–1953, including:
  - 1945 conferences and the emergence of the superpowers
  - emerging differences between the superpowers (ACHMH187)
  - the Truman Doctrine and its consequences (ACHMH187, ACHMH192)
  - impact of the early crises: the Berlin blockade and airlift, China becoming communist in 1949 and the Korean War (ACHMH187)

Focus of study
- Development of the Cold War to 1968, including:
  - policy of containment, domino theory and the emergence of peaceful coexistence
  - superpower rivalry: the arms race and space race (ACHMH188)
  - the nature and impact of crises: Berlin Wall 1961, Cuba 1962, Czechoslovakia 1968 (ACHMH188)
- Détente, including:
  - economic and political reasons for détente (ACHMH188)
  - geopolitical developments: Vietnam, Sino-Soviet split, the Middle East (ACHMH188)
  - features and consequences of détente (ACHMH188)
- Renewal and end of the Cold War, including:
  - Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and its impacts
  - US attitudes and policies under Reagan (ACHMH192)
  - Soviet attitudes and policies under Gorbachev (ACHMH192)
  - disarmament agreements 1978–1991 (ACHMH188)
  - collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the USSR (ACHMH190)