



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2022

Pearson Edexcel

In GCE History (8HI0/1F)

Paper 1: Breadth study with interpretations

Option 1F: In search of the American dream: the USA, c1917-96

Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications are awarded by Pearson, the UK's largest awarding body. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications websites at www.edexcel.com or www.btec.co.uk. Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at www.edexcel.com/contactus.

Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere

Pearson aspires to be the world's leading learning company. Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your students at: www.pearson.com/uk

Summer 2022

Publications Code 8HI0_1F_2206_ER

All the material in this publication is copyright

© Pearson Education Ltd 2022

8H10 1F

It was pleasing to see candidates able to engage effectively across the ability range in this, Advanced Level paper 1F.

The paper is divided into three sections. Section A comprises a choice of essays that assess understanding of the period in depth (AO1) by targeting the second order concepts of cause and/or consequence. Section B offers a further choice of essays, targeting any of the second order concepts of cause, consequence, change and continuity, similarity and difference, and significance. Section C contains a compulsory question which is based on two given extracts. It assesses analysis and evaluation of historical interpretations in context (AO3). Candidates in the main appeared to organise their time effectively, although there were some cases of candidates not completing one of the three responses within the time allocated. This was most evident on Section C, as would be expected. Whilst the impact of this cannot be fully mitigated against, and the best advice is thus to plan time accordingly in the first place, the responses that appeared to experience such timing issues yet overcame them to some degree were those who offered more direct responses. To wit, those who wrote abbreviated question 5 responses that focused sharply on arguing and analysing the given views, rather offering extensive explanations and quotes, were more likely to still produce a reasonably effective response, than those failing to reach any comparative analysis and evaluation. Finally, examiners did note a number of scripts that posed some problems with the legibility of handwriting. Examiners can only give credit for what they can read.

Of the three sections of Paper 1, candidates are generally more familiar with the essay sections, and in sections A and B most candidates were well prepared to write, or to attempt, an analytical response. Stronger answers clearly understood the importance of identifying the appropriate second order concept that was being targeted by the question. A minority of candidates, often otherwise knowledgeable, wanted to focus on causes and engage in a main factor/other factors approach, even where this did not necessarily address the demands of the conceptual focus. Candidates in the main were able to apply their knowledge and understanding in a manner suited to the different demands of questions in these two sections in terms of the greater depth of knowledge required where section A questions targeted a shorter period, as compared to the more careful selection generally required for the section B questions covering broader timespan.

Candidates do need to formulate their planning so that there is an argument and a counter argument within their answer; some candidates lacked sufficient treatment of these. The generic mark scheme clearly indicates the four bullet-pointed strands which are the focus for awarding marks and centres should note how these strands progress through the levels. Candidates do need to be aware of key dates, as identified in the specification, and ensure that they draw their evidence in responses from the appropriate time period.

In Section C, the strongest answers demonstrated a clear focus on the need to discuss different arguments given within the two extracts, clearly recognising these as historical interpretations. Such responses tended to offer comparative analysis of the merits of the different views, exploring the validity of the arguments offered by the two historians in the light of the evidence, both from the within the extracts, and candidates' own contextual knowledge. Such responses tended to avoid attempts to examine the extracts in a manner more suited to AO2, assertions of the inferiority of an extract on the basis of it offering less factual evidence, or a drift away from the specific demands of the question to the wider taught topic.

Question 1

Question 1 was the less popular of the two within Section A. It produced a wide range of responses, the majority of which were able to achieve the higher levels, considering the extent to which government action contributed to increased affluence, setting this against other factors. Commonly found points relating to government action included: how the New Deal laid the basis for subsequent affluence, wartime policies such as Lend-Lease and the GI Bill, 'Keynesian' policies such as the Employment Act of 1946, the loosening of tariffs to enable freer trade, specific measures such as the Highways Acts. Commonly offered alternative reasons were typically the effect of the Second World War, growing consumerism and consumption, trading conditions, and developing technologies.

At the higher end, there was an impressive knowledge of what constituted affluence in the years 1941-69. Common themes considered were the economic gains resulting from the war, consumerism, the 'baby boom', car and television ownership, the growth of suburbia, changes in leisure and travel as indicators of affluence. Where candidates were able to link the wealth of material offered to a convincing examination of causation, they were most successful. Stronger responses were distinguished by a sharp focus on the examining the causal relationship, exploring how factors such as government action brought about increasing affluence. Some stronger responses recognised and explored the complex relationship between factors such as government action, war and technological innovation, considering the extent to which these were interdependent.

Factors limiting the success of responses were typically (i) limited knowledge of government, (ii) potentially relevant material, not convincingly connected to the issue of affluence, and/or the second-order concept of causation, and (iii) drift away from the question when considering related issues, e.g. consideration of groups who did not share this growing affluence going beyond this into analysis of equality and civil rights.

Question 2

Question 2 was the more popular choice with candidates in Section A of the paper and produced a range of responses. The main discriminating factor in the quality of responses were candidates' knowledge of, and ability to focus carefully on, the issue of minority rights. In the lower levels, there were responses which gave accounts of the black civil rights movement which were often accurate, detailed and potentially relevant, but did not sufficiently link it to the focus of the question, at times with assertion of the impact such examples had on minority rights.

The majority of responses were able to offer at least some analysis of the importance of the example set by black American civil rights campaigners. What discriminated between the quality of responses often tended to be the quality of knowledge on minority rights, and the ability to focus on causation.

Most candidates identified apparent similarities in methods and campaigns, often highlighting peaceful and more militant examples of protests, were copied, as seen in the Red Power slogan or Brown Berets, the grape and lettuce boycotts, and the 'sip-ins' and fish ins. In countering the proposition, common factors seen were the significance of individuals within the minority rights movement, presidential support, the growth of liberal attitudes and the role of the media.

Candidates took different approaches, with some tending to organise around the different minority campaigns, examining the different reasons for gains within these, whilst others structured their responses around the factors, offering examples from across the different minority groups within these sections. Both approaches proved equally successful where candidates explored such issues with a clear focus on the question. The most successful responses were able to explore the relationship and relative importance of these across different minority rights campaigns. In challenging the given factor, a number also discussed the different concerns that particular minorities groups had, such as the retrieval of Native American lands. A small minority wrote about women's rights, assuming them to be a minority.

Question 3

This question was the slightly more popular choice within Section B. This question produced a range of responses. This question seemed to present more difficulties for candidates. Most responses were able to offer some analysis of various changes relating to immigration across the time frame, and thus some consideration of impact. However, a significant minority were less secure in their knowledge of relevant material, or did not focus material towards the conceptual demands of the question, particularly with regards to change.

In general, knowledge was stronger on the earlier part of the period, such as the government policies of the 1920s, but other commonly referenced issues include the relationship between immigrants/immigration and both red scares, restrictions already in place regarding Chinese immigrants and the preference for northern European immigrants. Candidates generally included the acts of 1921 and 1924 which set limits on numbers in legislation. The issue of immigrant labour from Latin American, particularly Mexico, featured in many responses. Many did consider the impact of the Second World War on existing immigrant groups, and attitudes towards immigration as the USA entered the post-war period, such as the Displaced Persons Act of 1948. Cold War considerations also featured, albeit not as heavily as earlier issues, with examples relations to Cuba, Vietnam and Cambodia. Kennedy's attitude to immigration, the relaxation of earlier policies in the 1960s, and the relationship between immigration and the slump of the 1970s were also evident in a minority.

In general, government policies and social attitudes featured more heavily than cultural and economic issues. A small minority offered astute analysis of the increasing immigrants within politics and other aspects of elite/professional society or looked at relevant regional variations. Where such issues were framed appropriately in terms of the question, they were duly rewarded. Stronger responses were more clearly focused on both impact and change, with one common (and successful) approach being to develop an analysis based on themes such as the political, social and economic impact of immigration, with a discussion of these across the time frame leading to an overall judgement on the extent to which the impact changed.

Question 4

Question 4 was the more popular of the two within Section B. In general, candidates responded with focused responses, with a variety of issues covered. There was a generally good offering on the given issue of war. When considering the influence of the First World War, many candidates were able to examine the significance of this in relation to isolationism, the era of Republican dominance with the promise of a 'return to normalcy', and in some cases the extent to which this contributed to the anti-communism that was seen after the war.

With regards to the given issue of war, candidates were more likely to place greater emphasis on the Second World War, exploring the influence this had on areas such as the increase in executive power, the relative electoral success of the Democratic and Republican parties after the Second World War, and resurgence of anti-communism. The significance of war in relation to the consequences of increased military spending was also examined by many, with reference to the Second World War, Korea and Vietnam. Analysis of the Cold War also featured in many, including examination of growing mistrust of the government and the growth of counterculture attitudes. Whilst in some cases candidates strayed too far into foreign policy, most were able to relate relevant issues back to domestic impact.

Most candidates offered one or more of the following alternative influences: anti-communism, the media, the economy, the role of individual presidents, and political beliefs and ideologies such as liberalism. What separated responses across the levels most tended to be how well material was connected to its influence on the political environment. Features of the strongest responses tended to be a more critical and nuanced consideration, and analysis of the relationship between different influences, e.g. war and anti-communism, or the extent to which the counter culture and the growth of liberalism were a reaction to the Cold War.

Question 5

Most candidates were able to access the higher two levels, generally by recognising and explaining the arguments in the two interpretations provided by Vivienne Sanders and Joseph R Conlin and building on this with own knowledge. A small minority did make limited use of the extracts, approaching this more as an 'AO1' essay, or used the extracts more as illustrative evidence to support points. The strongest responses tended to offer a comparative analysis of the views, discussing and evaluating these in the light of contextual knowledge. More successful responses tended to identify the actual arguments made within these extracts early in their responses, often with the introduction acting as a map for the rest of the essay, following this with a developed analysis and evaluation. Many candidates also showed significant own knowledge; the integration of this was more of a discriminating factor in the success of responses. The best answer directly engaged with the interpretations and evaluated them well with use of contextual knowledge.

The most common factors limiting the success of some responses were (i) relatively limited use of the extracts, (ii) use of these in a manner not fully suited to Section C, e.g. through attempts to analyse provenance in a manner more suited to AO2, or assert an extract is 'more reliable' as it includes statistics, and (iii) limited own knowledge, or a lack of integration of this in order to examine and evaluate the arguments. With regards to these, candidates should be minded that Section C is focused around AO3. Responses which made consideration of the argument and evidence within the extracts central to their responses, applying their contextual knowledge to consider the validity of the arguments offered, were more successful.

Responses tended to be more successful when they addressed the issues drawn from the specific question and extracts. Many candidates developed clear comparisons of the two different interpretations, and some candidates also picked up on similarities, such as the mention of the federal budget being in a poor state by Sanders and the excessive borrowing by Conlin. Considering Sanders interpretation related to the success of Reagan's tax cuts, candidates generally argued Reagan had achieved his aim of tax cut and that his policies at least in the short term had stimulated the economy. Most supported the view put forward by Conlin that the cuts had benefitted the upper middle class and the rich. Many candidates tended to follow Conlin's line of argument that Reagan's policies had removed the safety net for disadvantaged groups. However, some did argue that his term had seen the biggest period of growth and low inflation, and so examined the impact on the broader mass of Americans beyond references to the rich and the poor. In general, candidates' knowledge and understanding of issues was in the main good, with commonly featuring issues being the deficit, tax cuts, military spending, deregulation, and difficulties in reforming welfare.

Beyond points already mentioned elsewhere, one issue candidates should consider is how they approach such questions with regard to their own opinion. Whilst it is perfectly valid for to reach a judgement which is essentially 'positive' or 'negative' with regards to Reagan and his administration, candidates should seek to ensure they consider the merits of different views in the light of evidence. Examiners are looking for reasoned argument. Overall conclusions may be forceful and come down one way or the other, but discussion and analysis requires some degree of balance. In short, partiality at the expense of reasoned argument is unlikely to produce successful responses.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

Section A/B responses:

Features commonly found in responses which were successful within the higher levels:

- Candidates paying close attention to the date ranges in the question
- Sufficient consideration given to the issue in the question (e.g. main factor), as well as some other factors
- Explain their judgement fully – this need not be in an artificial or abstract way, but demonstrate their reasoning in relation to the concepts and topic they are writing about in order to justify their judgements
- Focus carefully on the second-order concept targeted in the question
- Give consideration to timing, to enable themselves to complete all three question with approximately the same time given over to each one
- An appropriate level, in terms of depth of detail and analysis, as required by the question – e.g. a realistic amount to enable a balanced and rounded answer on breadth questions.

Common issues which hindered performance:

- Pay little heed to the precise demands of the question, e.g. write about the topic without focusing on the question, or attempt to give an answer to a question that hasn't been asked – most frequently, this meant treating questions which targeted other second-order concepts as causation questions
- Answer a question without giving sufficient consideration to the given issue in the question (e.g. looking at other causes, consequences, etc, with only limited reference to that given in the question)
- Answers which only gave a partial response, e.g. a very limited span of the date range, or covered the stated cause/consequence, with no real consideration of other issues
- Assertion of change, causation, sometimes with formulaic repetition of the words of the question, with limited explanation or analysis of how exactly this was a change, cause, of the issue within the question.
- Judgement is not reached, or not explained
- A lack of detail.

Section C responses:

Features commonly found in responses which were successful within the higher levels:

- Candidates paying close attention to the precise demands of the question, as opposed to seemingly pre-prepared material covering the more general controversy as outlined in the specification
- Thorough use of the extracts; this need not mean using every point they raise, but a strong focus on these as views on the question
- A confident attempt to use the two extracts together, e.g. consideration of their differences, attempts to compare their arguments, or evaluate their relative merits
- Careful use of own knowledge, e.g. clearly selected to relate to the issues raised within the sources, confidently using this to examine the arguments made, and reason through these in relation to the given question; at times, this meant selection over sheer amount of knowledge
- Careful reading of the extracts, to ensure the meaning of individual statements and evidence within these were used in the context of the broader arguments made by the authors
- Attempts to see beyond the stark differences between sources, e.g. consideration of the extent to which they disagreed, or attempts to reconcile their arguments.

Common issues which hindered performance:

- Limited use of the extracts, or an imbalance in this, e.g. extensive use of one, with limited consideration of the other
- Limited comparison or consideration of the differences between the given interpretations
- Using the extracts merely as sources of support
- Arguing one extract is superior to the other on the basis that it offers more factual evidence to back up the claims made, without genuinely analysing the arguments offered
- Heavy use of own knowledge, or even seemingly pre-prepared arguments, without real consideration of these related to the arguments in the sources
- Statements or evidence from the source being used in a manner contrary to that given in the sources, e.g. through misinterpretation of the meaning of the arguments, or lifting of detail without thought to the context of how it was applied within the extract
- A tendency to see the extracts as being polar opposites, again seemingly through expectation of this, without thought to where there may be degrees of difference, or even common ground.