



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2023

Pearson Edexcel
In GCE History (8HI0/1G)
Advanced Subsidiary

Paper 1: Breadth study with interpretations

Option 1G: Germany and West Germany,
1918-89

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Section A..

Question 1

Question 1 asked candidates to consider whether a lack of popular support was the main reason for the problems faced by the Weimar Republic in the years 1919-32. This was overwhelmingly the more popular question in section A, and proved to be accessible for the majority.

At the top end candidates were able to offer good evidence on the levels of popular support the Weimar Republic enjoyed, and were able to locate the specific groups that tried to undermine the authority of the Republic, such as those who wanted to see a return of the Kaiser. These candidates sought to weigh the lack of popular support against other reasons for the problem faced by Weimar governments. Accurate information was usually given concerning the nature of the Weimar constitution, economic challenges, and the roles of extremist parties.

In level 3 candidates tended to overload their answers with evidence from the early years of Weimar, focussing on the putsches and hyperinflation in particular. This prevented an overall analysis and convincing argument.

Less successful candidates tended to offer a narrative of the main events and asserted the importance of one of them.

Question 2

Question 2 asked candidates to consider whether new employment opportunities were the most important reason for improvements in the role and status of women in the years 1918-32. This question was favoured by a minority, and proved to be less accessible than question 1.

At the top end candidates were aware of new career opportunities for women in the fields of office administration, education, the service sector and assembly line production. Candidates weighed this against the political benefits of living in a democracy, and the consequent improvements in cultural and social activities that became available to women.

In level 3 candidates tended to centre their answers on the 'new woman', and the offence this caused to conservative and traditional minds, and failed to offer substantial evidence for other reasons for the improved role and status of women.

Less successful candidates often tried to frame their answer around the roles of women in World War I and the misogyny of the rising NSDAP.

Section B

Question 3

Question 3 asked candidates to consider the extent to which the Weimar and FRG systems of government were different. This proved to be an accessible question that produced some very good answers.

At the top end candidates understood what is meant by 'systems of government' and centred their answers on how the FRG constitution avoided the pitfalls of Weimar. Therefore, emphasis was placed on the FRG's modification of proportional representation, the limited powers given to the president and the exclusion of extremist parties. Some candidates included the supporting roles that foreign governments played for the FRG, as opposed to the international attitude to Germany at the end of World War I.

In level 3 candidates generally tended to talk about the FRG in some detail, but with only passing reference to Weimar, and thus failed to fulfil the criteria demanded in the concept of similarity and difference.

Less successful candidates tended to offer material on the roles of Adenauer and Erhardt, stressing the superiority of these politicians over the abilities of Weimar politicians.

Question 4

Question 4 asked candidates to consider how accurate it is to say that recovery from the Second World War was the most significant economic challenge for Germany in the years 1933-89. This was the more popular option in Section B, and proved to be accessible.

At the top end candidates covered the time frame well. The majority of answers offered evidence and evaluation involving the effects of the Great Depression, the aftermath of 1945, and the oil crises in the 1970s. A minority of candidates were able to give detail on the economic consequences of the Nazi's war-time economy, and considered the economic challenges of autarky. Candidates were generally well prepared in how to evaluate significance, and a good proportion of answers were in level 4.

In level 3 candidates tended to overload their answers with evidence from 1945-9, and the role of Adenauer. The result was an imbalance of evidence and evaluations that were often assertive.

Less successful candidates tended to offer general statements about the Nazis bringing down unemployment and / or about the social market economy.

Section C

Question 5

Question 5 asked candidates use the extracts and their own knowledge to consider the view that Hitler invaded Poland because he thought the coming war would be a 'local conflict'. The extracts from Michael Burleigh and Richard Evans proved to be accessible

to the vast majority of candidates. The interpretation in Extract 1: that Hitler was convinced that Britain and France would continue to appease him, and he would be able to fight a 'local conflict' in Poland, contrasted with the interpretation in Extract 2: that Hitler was ready to fight a general war over Poland.

At the top end candidates selected points of interpretation from the extracts and developed the rival interpretations through the deployment of well-selected evidence and arguments from their own knowledge.

In level 3 candidates tended to explain the meaning of the extracts and opt in favour of one or the other without development of the rival interpretations.

Less successful candidates tended to offer paraphrases from the extracts and generally failed to integrate their own knowledge with the material in the extracts.