



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2023

Pearson Edexcel

In GCE History (8HI0/2F)

Advanced Subsidiary

Paper 2: Depth Study

Option 2F: India, c1914-48: the road to
independence

Option 2F.2: South Africa, 1948-94: from
apartheid state to 'rainbow nation'

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Comments for PE report

Introduction

It was pleasing to see candidates able to engage effectively across the ability range in summer examination series of the AS Level Paper 2 AS Level Paper 8HI02F which covers the options India c1914-48 (8HI02F.1) and South Africa 1948-94 (8HI02F.2). The paper is divided into two sections. Section A contains a compulsory two-part question for the option studied, each part based on one source. It assesses source analysis and evaluation skills (AO2). Section B comprises a choice of essays that assess understanding of the period in depth (AO1) by targeting five second order concepts – cause, consequence, change/continuity, similarity/difference and significance.

Performance compared favourably to previous series with most candidates coping well with Section A. Candidates demonstrated that they are able to comprehend, select and summarise from the source material. Most are able to make relevant comments using the provenance. However, some candidates are still not clear on what is meant by 'value' and 'weight' in the context of source analysis and evaluation. It is important to note that Question 1a/2a focuses on value and no marks are awarded for examining the shortcomings of the source. Candidates are well advised to avoid wasting time on this. In this series, performance by some candidates in Section A was affected by the absence of the detailed knowledge base required to draw upon contextual material to support/challenge points derived from the sources. In answering Question 1b/2b, some candidates concentrated their use of contextual knowledge on what was missing from the source. This is a legitimate approach where there is reason to judge that there is a deliberate omission or an omission through ignorance, but it is not legitimate where a candidate refers to the omission of events that had not happened at the time of the production of the source. The best responses come from candidates who have concentrated on the focus of the question, for example 'attitudes', 'reasons', 'beliefs' etc. and draw inferences, explain and support this with contextual knowledge. A significant proportion of candidates evaluate the sources in a vacuum and draw inferences and support with context that is not related to the focus of the enquiry. Sharper focus will help candidates to make the most of their time and produce effective answers. Most candidates did use their time effectively and, although a few responses were quite brief, there was little evidence on this paper of candidates having insufficient time to answer questions both sections. The ability range was diverse, but the design of the paper catered for all abilities.

In Section B, in this series, most responses had an analytical focus and there were very few that were wholly descriptive essays that were devoid of analysis and, for the most part, responses were soundly structured. The most common weakness in Section B essays was a lack of knowledge and especially precise knowledge applied to the question. Some candidates did not focus on the time period set. It is important that candidates read the question carefully and note the time period before planning and writing their answers. This avoids mistakes that undermine performance. It is also important to realise that Section A and Section B questions may be set from any part of any Key Topic, and, as a result, full coverage of the specification is enormously important.

The candidates' performance on individual questions is considered in the next section.

Q1a

Candidates were able to use the fact that this was by Gandhi and link this to what they knew of his relationship to Indian nationalism. There was good use of the content of the source by most

candidates, with better responses able to explain that Gandhi's position of respect meant that his instructions were more likely to be followed and using specific examples of resistance to show this.

Q1b

Understanding of this source was generally sound. Many candidates dealt effectively with the source, using appropriate and specific contextual knowledge to support their analysis. A number of candidates were weaker in their evaluation, with some moving little beyond the fact that it provided a single view.

Q2a

Many responses dealt well with the content of the source, identifying the reasons given for the shift toward increased violence and making use of the provenance to refer to Sharpeville and the imprisonment of ANC leaders as examples to illustrate what was said in the source. Better responses often used these to link to the question of value through valid exploration of the role of Mkwazi and the context of the trial.

Q2b

Many candidates were able to answer this question effectively. Better responses were able to seize upon Malan's references to Christianity and respect to analyse the society of the time and offer a balanced argument on how far he was likely to be accurate in his depiction of the National Party's aims. Often, such answers were able to distinguish effectively between the rhetoric and the reality. A minority of candidates left it at stock evaluation of a political speech, but most were able to develop this with specific references to policies enacted by the National Party once in power to lend weight to arguments on value.

Section B

It was disappointing to note the problems many candidates had in identifying the correct dates for key events, particularly in the section on South Africa.

Q3

Approximately equal numbers of candidates tackled questions 3 and 4. Most candidates tended to compare Jinnah with Gandhi. A sizeable minority contrasted Jinnah with the activities of the British. In all cases, candidates attempted to develop an analytical approach to the question, allowing access to the higher levels when supported by specific contextual knowledge, links to the conceptual focus of the question and the development of appropriate criteria for judgement. Q. A minority of responses struggled to go beyond assertions.

Q4

Approximately equal numbers of candidates tackled questions 3 and 4. Candidates clearly understood the focus of this question. There were more narrative responses to this question than to question 3. However, the majority of candidates were able to explain the judgements that they made with allusions to specific examples to support their analysis.

Q5

Insufficient candidates tackled this question to comment meaningfully.

Q6

Approximately equal numbers of candidates tackled questions 6 and 8. The majority of responses understood the focus of this question. Different approaches were seen – and were valid. For example, some candidates discussed and weighed the factors that brought success and failure for the ANC. Other candidates compared the opposition of the ANC with the activities of other groups, such as the contribution of Steve Biko and Black Power. Others also discussed the strength of the National Party and apartheid. Narratives were very rare with the vast majority of candidates able to create an analytical approach that culminated in a clear judgement.

Q7

This was the least popular question in this section of the paper. Most responses dealt well with the demands of the question, but a sizeable minority struggled to go beyond a narrative of the ways in which the National Party attempted to shore up its power or else a description of the ways in which it was challenged by opponents of the regime.

Q8

Approximately equal numbers of candidates tackled questions 6 and 8. A significant minority of candidates focused exclusively on analysing the roles of Mandela and de Klerk and did not move beyond this. However, such responses were often able to use the material to good effect, weighing the relative importance of the contribution of each man. Candidates were able to produce well-reasoned responses that engaged in a valid analysis of the impact of Mandela.

Paper Summary

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

Section A

Value of Source Question (1(a)/2(a))

- Candidates must be more prepared to make valid inferences rather than to paraphrase the source
- Focus inferences, contextual support and explanations on the focus of the enquiry
- Be prepared to back up inferences by adding additional contextual knowledge from beyond the source
- Move beyond stereotypical approaches to the nature/purpose and authorship of the source e.g. look at the specific stance and/or purpose of the writer
- Avoid writing about the limitations of the source when assessing its value to the enquiry.

Weight of Source Question (1(b)/2(b))

- Candidates should be prepared to assess the weight of the source for an enquiry by being aware that the author is writing for a specific audience. Be aware of the values and concerns of that audience.

- In assessing weight, it is perfectly permissible to use contextual knowledge to support/challenge statements and claims made in the source
- Consider omissions from the source material only where it is apparent that there is a deliberate decision to exclude something, or the ignorance of the author has led to omission
- Try to distinguish between fact and opinion by using your contextual knowledge of the period
- In coming to a judgement about the nature/purpose of the source, take account of the weight you may be able to give to the author's evidence in the light of his or her stance and/or purpose.

Section B

Essay questions

- Candidates must revise thoroughly and ensure that they have good knowledge to draw upon in addressing the essay question. Candidates must provide more factual details in support of their arguments. Weaker responses lacked depth and sometimes range
- Take a few minutes to plan your answer before you begin to write your response
- Pick out three or four key themes and then provide an analysis of (for e.g.) the target significance mentioned in the question, setting its importance against other themes rather than providing a description of each
- Pay more careful attention to key phrases in the question when analysing and use them throughout the essay to prevent deviation from the central issues and concepts
- It is a good idea to address the factor in the question where given. This makes it easier to consider relative significance
- Try to explore links between issues to make the structure flow more logically and the arguments more integrated.

