



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2024

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 was comparative to previous series. Most candidates coped well with Section A. Candidates demonstrated that they are able to comprehend, select and summarise from the source material. Some candidates, however, did struggle to make inferences that were fully directed to the question and that were supported effectively. Most are able to make relevant comments using the provenance. However, it continues to be the case that 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. Some candidates wasted valuable time dealing with 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, the best responses come from candidates who have concentrated on the focus of the question and draw inferences, explaining and supporting this with contextual knowledge. A significant proportion of candidates evaluate the sources in a vacuum. 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 wholly descriptive essays that were devoid of analysis. The majority of 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. It continues to be the case that some candidates do 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 important.

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

Q1a

Candidates were able to correctly identify the value of the letter being a secret one and thus containing less guarded interpretations, even if some struggled to go beyond that point. Most responses were able to draw out the content to be supported by the context and make use of the provenance to explain that these were people in a position to know and in a position to care about the consequences and circumstances of Direct Action Day. Only a few responses were able to build on this to explain the position of the British authorities and what they were likely to say contrasted

with what was actually said as a source of value, but this did not prevent candidates from reaching top levels where this was not recognised.

Q1b

Most responses were able to analyse the value of the source in terms of its provenance beyond simple statements of generic utility. Responses were able to weigh the content of the source with contextual knowledge effectively and in some detail, though with varying degrees of adherence to the thrust of what was asked or the specifics of the Cripps Mission. Only a very few responses identified the high level access of Moraes being briefed by Nehru, and even those who did struggled to make use of the information effectively to assess weight. There appeared to be less reliance this series on dubious inferences and reasoning.

Q2a

Overall, responses dealt well with the content of the source, drawing out what Mandela's hopes were and how they were expressed, as well as comparing that to what was done by Mandela both before and after the speech to ascertain value. Nearly all responses were able to use the fact that it was a speech by Mandela to full effect to explain the value of the material in relation to assessing Mandela's hopes. A small minority of responses spent too long detailing what Mandela's hopes were and failed to assess the material as anything other than information.

Q2b

Most candidates recognised the value of Suzman's role and thus the weight of what she said, though a minority seemed to think she was not of South African origin and used this to attempt to discredit the content. Some responses suggested that Suzman was likely to be biased, with varying degrees of support; candidates were unlikely to develop the reasoning to gain access to the higher levels on this point alone. The best responses avoided bias entirely and considered and developed Suzman's access to information and position.

Section B

Q3

Approximately equal numbers of candidates tackled questions 3 and 4. Nearly all candidates were able to make use of the First World War as a factor for the growth of nationalism and add other relevant factors to make a case about which was most important. All answers had some relevant detail on the war itself that was useful to an answer but a trend was that responses tended to focus on a single factor with others not fully developed and not fully compared and argued.

Q4

Approximately equal numbers of candidates tackled questions 3 and 4. Responses largely worked the chronological parameters of the question, with only one or two trying to make use of events in the 1940s. On the whole, this was well answered. Some candidates considered other factors that were significant; others focused on whether or not Gandhi's role was significant. Both approaches were credited appropriately.

Q5

Insufficient candidates tackled this question to comment meaningfully.

Q6

This was slightly less popular than question 7. Many responses tended to focus on 1948, the events leading up to that election and the reasons for the NP's victory. Whilst it was possible to make connections and arguments that allowed these events to be relevant, they should not have been the only elements in the answer. Essays were generally well-structured and argued with good conclusions, with the best answers weighing the growth of Afrikaner nationalism against the importance of other factors that were responsible for the implementation of apartheid.

Q7

This was the most popular question in this section of the paper. Responses were often well-supported and well-structured. A small minority focused almost entirely on the consequences of Sharpeville as a narrative but even these were able to make a case for both sides of significance of Sharpeville.

Q8

This was the least popular question in this section of the paper. Responses tended to have similar factors, in terms of international opposition and internal opposition, but often struggled to cover both sides. There was a tendency for candidates to stray beyond the chronological parameters in this question. However, the vast majority of responses were linked to the thrust of the question and well enough executed to access the higher levels of the mark scheme effectively.

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
- Candidates should focus inferences, contextual support and explanations on the focus of the enquiry
- Candidates should be prepared to back up inferences by adding additional contextual knowledge from beyond the source
- Candidates should 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
- Candidates should 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 and 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
- Candidates should 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
- Candidates should try to distinguish between fact and opinion by using contextual knowledge of the period
- In coming to a judgement about the nature/purpose of the source, candidates should take account of the weight that can be given 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
- Candidates should take a few minutes to plan the answer before beginning to write the response
- Candidates are advised to 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
- Candidates should 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
- Candidates should try to explore links between issues to make the structure flow more logically and the arguments more integrated.

