



# **Examiners' Report**

## **Principal Examiner Feedback**

**June 2017**

**Pearson Edexcel International Advanced  
Level in History (WHI01) Paper 1B**

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## **Principal Examiner Report 2017**

### **iA Level History (1B Russia)**

#### **WHI01: International Advanced Subsidiary**

WHI01 is a new International Advanced Subsidiary examination that is part of the new iA Level History qualification, WHI01 (unit 1) is a Depth Study with Interpretations, and comprises four options; 1A France in Revolution 1774-99, 1B Russia in Revolution 1881-1917, 1C Germany 1918-45, and 1D Britain 1964-90. The assessment criteria for all the options, and questions are AO1 and AO3, and all the options and questions, are covered by a generic mark scheme, based on Level descriptors.

It is important that centres take on board some generic comments which are based on the marking of this summer's cohort, and consider and apply these when preparing candidates for future examinations in these options.

- WHI01 is both a study in depth and a study of interpretations, and it is necessary for candidates to do both, at all levels in the mark scheme, in order to score marks. Ignoring the stated view in the question, and merely writing information that may be relevant to the general focus of the question does not fully meet the criteria for Level 1, and consequently none of the other levels. Even at Level 1 the mark scheme expects simple or generalised consideration of the stated view in the question. Some candidates paid very little attention to the stated view (ignoring it completely or sometimes only referring to it in the conclusion) and narrated or described other information that was either relevant or not to the actual question.
- Across all of the options, in candidate responses, there was very little evidence seen of planning. As the examination is two hours long, implying that candidates might divide that time equally between the two essays they choose, it would seem sensible to devote some time (possibly no more than 10 minutes per question) to planning the structure of the answer to each question. That would hopefully ensure that when the answer is written the stated view is considered (Level 2, 3 and 4 all require, to varying degrees, understanding, analysis and exploration of the given view) and then other factors/views can follow, which will then allow the candidate to establish some criteria by which they are able to consider the importance, or not, of the given view and make some judgements. Those candidates who planned (this appeared on their examination script before they answered the question) invariably scored better than candidates who had not planned. Planned answers tended to score at the top of Level 3 and into, and including the top of Level 4, whereas unplanned answers meandered and judgements tended to be stated, rather than supported by valid criteria, and often achieved marks at the Level 2 and Level 3 boundary or below.
- The need to stress to candidates that in examination situations they must read the question carefully, and not take the question as an opportunity to write all they know about the topic, or answer a question they would have preferred that is near to the actual question, but not the actual question.
- There was some evidence of candidates running out of time, but they were very few. Impressing the need to plan essays in the examination is surely the remedy to this problem.

### **Option 1B Russia in Revolution 1881-1917**

- Question 2 and 4 proved to be the most popular, followed by question 3, then question 1.
- In question 1 candidates tended to write in depth about Tsarist rule, but were vague in their consideration of the benefit it had on the people. Quite often comments were generalised and non-specific. The question required some genuine understanding of what the benefits were, or not, and an appreciation that maybe some groups of people benefitted at the expense of others.
- While question 2 was popular many, candidates spent too much of the answer on the general causes of the 1905 Revolution and insufficient on the impact of the Russo-Japanese war.
- The answer below scored a high mark in Level 2, as it showed some understanding of the issue, but analysis was attempted by describing some relevant point. However, the answer lacks range and depth, and criteria for judgement are implicit.

(This page is for your first answer)

The impact of Russia's defeat in the Russo-Japanese war was an important reason as to why there was a revolution in Russia in 1905, but not the main one. Other factors ~~had~~ were of ~~the~~ greater significance, such as the Bloody Sunday incident and the Social and Economic situations at the time.

First of all, the Russo-Japanese war was an important reason why revolution occurred in Russia in 1905. The Russian army was considered by its people to be one of the greatest in the world and battling a country like Japan, they were expected to win. This of course did not happen and defeat after defeat the Russian people were growing more aggrieved and moral was very low. This was a major cause of discontent amongst Russian citizens and was a reason why many Russians took to the streets and joined the revolution in 1905. The Russo-Japanese war ~~is~~ ~~was~~ was also a reason for the increasingly bad economy as arms were needed, ~~and~~ ~~and~~ food and soldiers had to be transported to the front. This indirectly led to more discontent <sup>between</sup> ~~between~~ the people and led to more protesters.

(This page is for your first answer) joining the revolution.

Despite being an important reason for the outbreak of revolution in Russia, the Russo-Japanese war was not the ~~main~~ main factor. Bloody Sunday was one of the main ones, as it angered many people and showed how inescapable the government was. In the incident of Bloody Sunday many people were killed, as well as many injured, in a non-violent protest led by a priest. The reaction of the Tsar angered a lot of people and made them ~~be~~ believe that their leader did not care ~~for~~<sup>about</sup> them. This was a major factor for the 1905 revolution in Russia and why many people became part of it ~~the~~ ~~conditions~~.

In addition another ~~as~~ main reason why there was a revolution in Russia in 1905 was the economic and political situations of the time. Even after some reforms, the majority of Russia's population were still peasants, and few of them created surplus crops. This led to economic ~~crisis~~<sup>downfall</sup>, and creating massive poverty and bad living conditions in the big cities but as well as in the countryside. Quite a few ~~per~~ percent of the population was hungry and did not see any other answer than to protest or join the revolution. Moreover, people were getting tired of the monarchic government and the fact that the only democratic part of

(This page is for your first answer) the government were the zemstva, the local councils. They wanted change, ~~more~~ more democracy and to be able to have a say in their country's rulings. This was another main reason which led to the outbreak of the 1905 Revolution in Russia.

In conclusion, the impact of Russia's defeat in the Russo-Japanese war was an important reason why the revolution took place in Russia in 1905, but the main reasons were the long-term economic and political situations in the country and the Bloody Sunday incident.

(This page is for your first answer) Russo-Japanese War weakened  and damaged the Tsar's image and lost land of Russia.

Others: - Poor economic situation, aggravated people had industry,  
- Bloody Sunday

- In question 3 many candidates were well versed on the wide ranging impact of the First World War on Romanov rule, but judging whether it damaged it 'beyond repair' proved more challenging, with some candidates not really addressing that focus.
- In question 4 many candidates were well versed in the reasons why the Bolsheviks were able to seize power, and judged these reasons against the impact of Lenin's presence. However, some candidates saw this as question where they could, in detail, describe his return, rather than consider the impact of his return.