



Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2023

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced
Level in History (WHI02/1B)

Option 1B: China, 1900-76

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

January 2023

Publications Code WHI02_1B_ER_2301

All the material in this publication is copyright

© Pearson Education Ltd 2023

Introduction

It was pleasing this January to see a number of well-informed and well-written responses from candidates on IAS Paper WHI02 1B which covers China, 1900-76. 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.

Although the January entry is much smaller than the summer entry, performance had much common with previous series. Candidates continue to find Section A more challenging than Section B. Some candidates are still not clear on what is meant by 'value' and 'weight' in the context of source analysis and evaluation. For some candidates, performance in Section A is limited by the absence of the detailed knowledge base required to add contextual material to support/challenge points derived from the sources. Most candidates did use their time effectively this January 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 allowed all abilities to be catered for. Furthermore, in Section B, most responses had an analytical focus and only a few responses were wholly descriptive essays that were devoid of analysis. For the most part, essay responses were soundly structured. The most common weakness in Section B essays was the lack of a sharp focus on the precise terms of the question and/or the second order concept that was targeted. This meant that some candidates wrote at length on topics that were only peripherally related to the question, or which did not cover the whole time period.

It remains important to note that Section A topics are drawn from highlighted topics on the specification whereas 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. There was little evidence on this paper of candidates having insufficient time to answer questions from Sections A and B.

Question 1 (a)

Most candidates produced answers that achieved at good level 2 and into level 3. Most candidates understood the question and were able to comprehend the source and comment on what it revealed about the significance of the development of railways in China in the years 1900–27. At level 3, candidates were able to draw out valid inferences from the source evidence, including the evidence of reliance on foreign funding, the significant role railways played in the development of China's economy and

especially in the development of trade. The best answers developed the inferences with well-selected context to establish their validity. Fewer candidates in this series applied secure contextual knowledge to develop inferences. Some candidates did include free standing knowledge, often about the Murkden incident in the 1930s. Some candidates approached the question by focusing entirely on aspects of the provenance. While this was effective in addressing bullet point 3 of the mark scheme, it meant that candidates did not engage with the content of the source and were unable to draw out inferences. Candidates need to remember that they must consider value in the light of the content and their contextual knowledge as well as the provenance of the source. Those candidates who discussed the limitations could not be rewarded for that part of their answer as it is not the focus of part a responses.

Doc ID: 0522000056423

This is a level 3 response. It begins with level 3 evaluation. It shows contextual understanding of the importance of the railways to trade and does support this from the source. It achieves level 2 for bullet points 1 and 2 in the mark scheme - selecting and summarising valid evidence from the source and using context to expand on these points.

Question 1 (b)

Candidates understood the source material and were able to select from it to develop some inferences about the origins of the Hundred Flowers Campaign. Most candidates achieved in level 2 and level 3. To achieve in level 4, candidates do need to interrogate the source evidence, to challenge the content as well as support it and to apply the support the points they make on the provenance from the source. Most candidates considered the strengths and limitations of the source, and many used this to comment on the weight that should be attached to the source for the enquiry. Less effective answers tend to do this by referring to adding and subtracting weight, whilst the most effective develop criteria for judgement. There was continuing trend this series for some candidates to use the structure of the generic mark scheme to write their answer. Whilst this meant that they addressed all three bullet points, it did mean that they did not integrate the ideas in their answer so that, in particular, knowledge was free standing and not used to develop and explain inferences. This technique would be best avoided for candidates who wish to access the higher levels of the mark scheme. Candidates also need to ensure that they are clearly focused on the wording of the question. This question called for a focus on the origins of the Hundred Flowers Campaign. A significant number of candidates focused on the outcome of the campaign which meant that their contextual knowledge was not properly focused.

Doc ID: 0522000056420

This is a high level 3 response. It uses the provenance to consider the validity of the evidence in the source and it applies its contextual understanding of the origins of and intentions for the Hundred Flowers Campaign to the claims made in the source. It does not really weigh the source and so does not access level 4.

Question 2

There was only one answer to this question.

Question 3

This was the most popular question. The candidates who addressed this question demonstrated, in the main, secure knowledge of the reasons why Japan was able to expand in China in the years 1931–45, and contrasted the given reason, civil strife between the GMD and CCP, with alternative causes such as Chiang's appeasement of Japan, the weakness of the international response to its expansion in Manchuria in the early 1930s, Japan's military superiority and Chiang's military incompetence and weakness. Weaker responses tended to lack secure chronology and focused on the civil war between the GMD and CCP after the defeat of Japan in 1945.

Doc ID: 0522000056419

This is a very effective response that achieved into level 4. It has a focus on causation and a good range of reasons which are discussed. The given factor is not developed in depth and this places it in the lower part of level 4.

Question 4

This question prompted answers across the levels. Most candidates had some knowledge of China's economy in the years 1962-76, although some candidates devoted more time to discussing the Great Leap Forward in depth. As this immediately preceded the period in question, the material was not entirely relevant. Other candidates only considered the impact of the Cultural Revolution which ignored the period of recovery from the Great Leap Forward, and often led candidates away from a consideration of chaos or not in the economy to look at the wider political, social and cultural impacts of the Cultural Revolution that were not the focus of this question. Again, candidates do need to plan their answers and check that they are focusing on the question set and not a more generic focus that they may have covered in studying and revising. The best responses were carefully planned answers that had a good grasp of the developments in the economy and were able to produce a tightly focused analysis.

Paper Summary

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

Section A

Value of Source Question (1(a))

- Candidates must be more prepared to make valid inferences rather than to paraphrase the source
- 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 deficiencies 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
- Try to distinguish between fact and opinion by using your contextual knowledge of the period
- Knowledge should be integrated with the source evidence, to discuss the inferences drawn and their validity in the light of the contextual understanding 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
- In assessing weight, it is perfectly permissible to assess reliability by considering what has been perhaps deliberately omitted from the source. However, simply stating that a source is limited because it does not cover certain events or developments does not establish weight since no source can be comprehensive.

Section B

Essay questions

- Candidates must provide more factual details as evidence. 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
- Pay careful attention to the date range in the question. Plan the answer with a focus on this range and avoid lengthy exploration of events outside of the time period set
- Try to explore links between issues to make the structure flow more logically and the arguments more integrated.

