



Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback
January 2025

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced
Level In History (WHI01 1B) Option 1B:
Russia in Revolution, 1881–1917

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WHI01 1B : Russia in Revolution, 1818-1917

The entry for this paper saw a small increase based on the last series. Candidates chose two questions from four.

Question 1

This was well answered. Many candidates has relevant and extensive knowledge about the growth of railways and were able to analyse and evaluate its role in Russia's economic development. Other factors that were considered where mainly based around the role of Witte and moving to the gold standard. There were candidates who saw the expansion of cities and an emerging middle class as significant, and some linked those to railway expansion. Those candidates who gave criteria in relation to their judgements scored highly.

Question 2

This question was popular and generally well answered. Some candidates limited their view of repression to Stolypin's 'necktie' and while this was relevant and creditworthy it provided only a limited view on the issue raised by the question. Better answers saw repression in the wider context and considered the use of the Okhrana, Bloody Sunday and the Lena Goldfields Massacre as evidence that repression allowed Tsarist rule to survive. The issue in the question also required candidates to consider the use of political reform, and many focused on the October Manifesto and the duma. Those that made judgements based on repression versus reform scored the highest marks.

Question 3

This question was popular with candidates. Many displayed a lot of precise knowledge regarding the decisions made by the Tsar and the role of the Empress. While some candidates got a little bogged down in descriptions of Rasputin's life and rumoured behaviour, many candidates where able to make judgements in relation to issue in the question. Many argued that while the Empress was significant in weakening Romanov rule, ultimately in was the Tsar's decision to leave her in charge and the decisions he made to war front that had the most impact. Those candidates who gave criteria in relation to their judgements scored highly.

Question 4

There were varied responses to this question. Some candidates knew a lot more about Lenin than any other reason and this led to a relevant and creditworthy answer, but it was unbalanced. Those that considered Lenin along side factors such a Provisional Government weaknesses and the role of Trotsky produced more balanced answers that then allowed for considered criteria based judgments. Many candidates saw the Kornilov revolt and its consequences for the Bolsheviks and a very important factor.

Points to consider:

- This is a 'Depth study with Interpretations' which means that knowledge on its own is not enough. Knowledge needs to be applied to the interpretation that is raised by the question and judgements made.
- The time allowed for this examination is sufficient to allow a small amount of planning time for each answer.
- When judgments are made they need to be supported with criteria – it is not sufficient to state that a factor or consequence/effect/impact is the most 'important' or 'significant' without explaining the basis upon which that judgment has been made.

