



Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback
June 2025

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced
Subsidiary In History (WHI01/1B)

Paper 1: Depth Study with Interpretations
Option 1B: Russia in Revolution, 1881 - 1917

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WHI01 1B : Russia in Revolution, 1881-1917

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

Question 1

This was well answered. Candidates showed a range of knowledge regarding the reigns of Alexander III and Nicolas II. While many agreed that both were repressive in many ways, e.g. the use of the law, impact on revolutionary groups and the repression of nationalities with the Russia Empire, they balanced this with their attempts at reform and help for peasants and some economic expansion. Many candidates concluded that ultimately both were essentially repressive and only interested in maintaining autocracy as best they could.

Question 2

This question was reasonably well answered. Some candidates described the events of 1905 and little else. However, those that considered the issue raised by the question then balance their consideration of Bloody Sunday with other factors. Many focused on the impact of the Russo-Japanese War as a significant pre-text for the demand for change and the slowness of economic development and poor living conditions, both rural and urban, as key factors. Those that made a considered judgement, based on criteria, achieved marks in the highest mark band.

Question 3

This question was popular with candidates. Many displayed a lot of precise knowledge in relation to the issue raised by the question. The economic impact of the war thoroughly covered by many candidates before being balanced against the role of the Tsar, the role of the Tsarina and Rasputin and the 'progressive bloc'. Some allowed their answers to drift beyond the specific date range of 1914-16, and some candidates turned their answer into the reasons for revolution in February 1917.

Those that remained focused on the issue raised by the question and made judgements scored marks in the highest mark level.

Question 4

There were varied responses to this question. Some candidates knew little about the issue of 'dual power' and tended to move straight to the counter arguments of the significance of Lenin and Trotsky, the strength of the Bolsheviks and their arming by the Provisional Government and Bolshevik promises. These answers were unbalanced but credit worthy. Those candidates that produced balanced responses with judgement scored in the highest mark level.

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.

