



Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

November 2024

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In History (4WHI/01) Unit 1

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Paper 1 : Depth Studies

The assessment requirement was that candidates answer a set of questions from **two** options from a choice of eight. The most popular options were:

Option 3 : Germany: development of dictatorship, 1918-45

Option 6 : A world divided: superpower relations, 1943-72

Option 7 : A divided union: civil rights in the USA, 1945-74

All eight options required candidates to answer three sub-questions on the option topic. Each question had a different focus and tested a range of assessment objectives. Question (a) required candidates to identify the impression given by an author based on a small written extract and tested AO4. Question (b) required candidates to explain two effects and tested AO1 and AO2. Question (ci) and (cii) required candidates explain, analyse and make judgements about key features, events, causes, effects and significance and tested AO1 and AO2.

General comments

Across all eight options the following generic comments in relation to each sub question should be noted:

In question (a) selecting information to support the impression will limit the answer to marks within level 2; to move into level 3 the answer requires analysis of how the impression has been created by consideration of the author's selection of evidence, tone, emphasis or omission.

In question (b) knowledge of the effect is not in itself sufficient, there is a requirement to explain the effect in terms of how the given issue in the question has led to/brought about the outcome(s).

In question (c) knowledge needs to be used to develop an answer that considers the issue raised by the question and a criteria-based judgement is made. As well as the precise issue the question is focused on, candidates should pay careful attention to the requisite second-order concept (i.e. causation, consequence, significance), and the given date range.

Option 3: Germany: development of dictatorship, 1918-45

This option attracted the largest number of responses and on the whole was answered well. In question (a) many candidates were able to identify the impression given by the author about the Kapp Putsch, usually along the lines of that its weaknesses meant it was almost bound to fail. Candidates who scored marks in level 2 (3-4 marks) were able to support their inference of the impression by selecting examples from the extract. Those candidates who moved into level 3 (5-6 marks) also considered the author's treatment, emphasis and selection of material in order to explicitly show aspects of how the author created the impression that was inferred.

In question (b) many candidates were able to explain the effects of Nazi policies on Jewish people living in the occupied territories during the Second World War, with the most commonly offered points related to the impact of the setting up of ghettos and the Final Solution. All were creditworthy, and what differentiated candidates was the accuracy of the information they used (AO1) and the extent of the explanation in relation to the outcome (AO2), with stronger responses clearly developing how such policies led to outcomes, such as disease, starvation and deaths. A small minority wrote about issues outside of the parameters of the question, e.g. policies towards Jewish people within Germany in the years prior to the Second World War.

In question (c) candidates who clearly focused material towards the question from the start of points tended to do better. The strongest responses were able to sustain a focus on the demands of the question, deploying knowledge to discussion of the appropriate second-order concept, e.g. significance or causation. Some responses included effective judgements at the end of each point, e.g. explaining the relative importance of the point under discussion.

On (ci), most students were fairly secure in their knowledge of the Munich Putsch, and how this provided opportunities for the Nazi Party to grow, despite its failure. Most responses sought to make use of the other aspect provided within the question, the reorganisation of the Nazi Party, with the most typically offered material relating to the setting up of new groups, or the geographical reorganisation and the push towards centralisation shifting emphasis of different aspects of the Party's ideological programme. Candidates considering other issues tended to examine one or more of propaganda, the legacy of Versailles, Weimar weaknesses or hyperinflation. Stronger responses were more able to contain material to the parameters of the question, i.e. not drift to how Hitler became Chancellor, and clearly demonstrate the relevance of any material from prior to 1923 to causing growth in the given period.

On (cii), most candidates were able to offer a sufficient range of issues to examine the relative importance of the impact of Nazi policies in the years 1933-39. The vast majority were able to offer some valid material on the given issue of policies towards women, typically relating to policies to encourage the role of homemaker and motherhood, or restrictions in the world of work, and a number were able to demonstrate the variation in the impact these had, e.g. how policies were reshaped in the face of the demands of the rearmament policies in the late 1930s, or the extent to which professional women experienced a greater impact. Most examined the impact on Catholics with valid material and focus, although a small minority did conflate Catholics and Protestant groups. Other commonly considered issues were the impact on children, workers, religious groups other than Catholics, Jews and other minorities. Those who could ensure that material on these was clearly linked to the question via a discussion of the extent to which they were impacted were more likely to secure marks in level 4.

Option 6: A world divided: superpower relations, 1943-72

In question (a) most candidates were able to identify a valid impression, typically along the lines that the reality of Comecon benefitted the Soviet Union more than the other members. Many supported this by selecting evidence from the extract, and those who explicitly considered how the author's choice of language or selection of material helped form this impression moved into level 3 (5-6 marks).

In question (b) many candidates had thorough and precise knowledge regarding the effects of the Potsdam Conference on relations; it was those who explained how decision and developments at Potsdam brought about the effects they chose to write about who achieved the higher level. The most commonly featured issues were tension over nuclear issues, increasing awareness of Soviet actions relating to Poland, less harmonious personal relations between the leaders and decisions made regarding Germany. Candidates who offered specific detail on these, and clearly explained how these led to (various) outcomes were most successful.

In question (ci) candidates generally had good knowledge of relevant issues, with candidates typically writing about issues such as Nagy's actions or expectations of Western intervention, as well as the given issues of Rakosi's rule and de-Stalinisation. There was generally good knowledge of these issues. Whilst a very small number seemed to mistake Rakosi for Nagy, the vast majority were able to offer valid material and some discussion of the impact the authoritarian nature of his regime had, or issues with living standards. Similarly, most demonstrated at least some knowledge of the impact of Stalin's death and Khrushchev's attempt to offer some relaxation of the Stalinist model. Stronger responses were able to relate these factors together, examining how the apparent prospect of greater freedoms in the context of what Hungarians had previously experienced under Rakosi worked to contribute to the uprising.

In (cii) many candidates showed good knowledge and a clear analytical focus on the consequences of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. Most were able to offer some discussion of international criticism, although the specifics of this tended to be lesser than for some of the other consequences considered by candidates. The strongest responses were able to consider a range of responses across both Western and communist nations. Most demonstrated understanding of the Brezhnev Doctrine and some explanation / analysis of this as a consequence of the invasion. Other issues considered tended to be the impact this had on relations between the superpowers and European nations on both sides, and the impact on Czechoslovakia and its people.

Option 7: A divided union: civil rights in the USA, 1945-74

In question (a) many candidates were able to identify an impression given by the author regarding the Montgomery Bus Boycott, with answers typically being along the lines of it having made a significant positive contribution to the quest for civil rights. The vast majority of candidates were able to support these using evidence from the extract, and many achieve Level 3 by demonstrating how this impression had been created by means of emphasising the phrases used by the author, or with reference to material that was omitted.

In question (b) most candidates were able to offer points clearly demonstrating the effects of the Red Scare. The most popular issues considered tended to be the impact it had in creating a climate of fear, the repercussions for those accused in terms of employment or socially, the impact it had on the media and culture, and in the political sphere. The strongest responses were able to offer detailed examples, and were able to use this to clearly explain how the Red Scare brought about the consequences examined. A very small minority did write about the Cold War, with limited linkage to the specific question.

In question (ci) most responses were able to offer sufficient material and engagement with the question's conceptual demands in order to achieve the higher two levels. The main issues distinguishing between those which were more and less successful tended to be i) their ability offer material and focus on the given period of the 1960s, ii) the quality of knowledge, particularly on 'new leaders' and iii) the degree to which they focused material on 'changes to methods'. Most offered good material on Martin Luther King, relevant protests to illustrate and examine changing methods, and a range of new leaders and groups, most notably Malcolm X, the Nation of Islam and the Black Panthers, as well as to a lesser degree others such as Stokely Carmichael.

In question (cii) most candidates were able to cover a range of issues from the protest movements emerging in the 1960s. The majority were able to offer valid material on the given issue of the gains made by women, typically discussing issues such as Equal Pay, the Equal Rights Amendment, Roe v Wade and to a lesser extent discrimination in education under Title IX. A range of groups and individuals, such as Betty Friedan and NOW, were referenced, with the more successful responses being clearly able to relate such examples to the demands of the question. Most candidates were able to consider other outcomes, such as the Anti-Vietnam War movement, gains resulting from civil rights, and the impact of student protests. Stronger responses, as well as offering more specific detail, were more likely to focus this carefully towards an analysis of consequences.

