



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2022

Pearson Edexcel

In GCE History (8HI0/2E)

Paper 2: Depth study

Option 2E.1: Mao's China, 1949–76

Option 2E.2: The German Democratic Republic,
1949–90

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

Summer 2022

Publications Code 8HI0_2E_2206_ER

All the material in this publication is copyright

© Pearson Education Ltd 2022

PE Report 8H10 2E June 2022

AS paper 2E, which covers the options of Mao's China (2E.1) and the German Democratic Republic (2E.2) again saw responses from across the ability range. The paper is divided into two sections. Section A contains a compulsory two-part question each based around one source and assesses 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.

In general, candidates again found Section A, the compulsory two-part source question, the more challenging largely because many were not clear what was meant by 'value' and 'weight' in the context of source analysis and evaluation (AO2). In question (a), some candidates still waste time by attempting to address how the source is not valuable to the enquiry which is not relevant to this question. More generally, the detailed knowledge that is required to add contextual material to support and/or challenge points derived from the sources was often absent. Also, some candidates continue to make generic comments on the provenance of the sources though more, taking their nature, origin and purpose into consideration, were able to evaluate the use of the sources to the enquiry in each question.

Section B, the section in which candidates were given a choice of three essays in order to assess understanding of the period in depth (AO1), still tends to be done better. There were few wholly descriptive answers with most candidates attempting to engage analytically with the demands of the questions. The majority of answers were soundly structured and clearly expressed. They also made some effort to come to a judgement. Lack of detailed knowledge of the material continues to be an issue for some as is a tendency not to engage fully enough with the specific focus of the question. Also, there is still a significant number of answers which lack balance in their response to the questions – candidates are reminded that, at this level, there is a requirement that as well as developing the stated factor in essay questions, they also require some development of a counter-case.

Question 1 (a)

In general, candidates were able to identify from the source that attitudes towards foreigners in China could be hostile at the launch of the Cultural Revolution but not necessarily so. There were some good responses which were able to develop such points with contextual knowledge of the activities of the Red Guards for example. Weak responses, though aware of the historical context, often paraphrased the source without attempting to draw inferences from it. Also, a number added information on the wider aspects of the Cultural Revolution without reference to the source content.

Question 1 (b)

There were some very good responses to this question. These were able to draw inferences from the sources with regards to the impact of revolutionary culture and art in China, notably that by emphasising the experiences of ordinary people, it was reaching new audiences. Candidates were often well informed on the role of Madame Mao and were able to add their knowledge of revolutionary opera to give context to their inferences. Comments on the source's reliability rightly pointed out its limitations as originating from a government-sponsored publisher and written in English for a foreign audience.

Question 2 (a)

In this question, many candidates were able to use the content of the source, and its origins, to consider the reasons for emigration from the GDR during the 1950s, however there were fewer who were able to draw inferences concerning its extent. Contextual knowledge, often referencing the building of the Berlin Wall, was added to such inferences but weaker responses often detailed information on the wider economic problems facing the GDR during the 1950s with little reference to the source content.

Question 2 (b)

Stronger responses to this question were able to make developed inferences from the content of the source concerning the use of propaganda and censorship in the GDR, for example how propaganda was targeted at youth or that the presence of West German news made censorship difficult. In adding contextual knowledge, candidates were often well informed of, for example, the activities of the FDJ or the control of the media by the SED. In making comments on the weight of the evidence for the enquiry, many pointed out the value of having lived experience in the GDR while also indicating the limitations of one person's recollections.

Question 3

This question elicited some very good responses. Candidates generally had a sound knowledge and understanding of the reunification campaigns and were able to use this as a basis for discussing their success. Weaker responses tended to lack precision and accuracy and to assert success rather than establish suitable criteria for judgement.

Question 4

This was a popular question and was often answered very well. The best answers to this question provided a range of ways in which involvement in the Korean War impacted positively on communist rule in China, many pointing out that relative success in the war reflected well on Mao and his government or gave him cover sufficient to remove opponents to the camps. In contrast, many argued that the colossal numbers killed, and the economic costs of the war, made communist rule unpopular. Many candidates were able to use such material to make impressive, reasoned judgements.

Question 5

There were fewer answers to this question but some good responses which were clearly able to examine how the introduction of communes did improve the lives of the peasantry, notably through improved healthcare or childcare. Most responses argued however, that communes were vastly unpopular, that the promises of better social care did not often materialise and that the influence of ambitious or frightened cadres during the Great Leap Forward led to mass hunger and death.

Question 6

Responses to this question were often comfortable in being able to evidence how the GDR was not democratic, with reference to the domination of government by the SED and its use of the levers of state to ensure what was, effectively, a dictatorship. Stronger answers did at least consider the outwardly democratic features written into the constitution, notably the holding of elections.

Question 7

There were few responses to this question but those candidates that did attempt it knew something of the relationship between the SED and the Protestant church, even if that did not amount to being able to address fully the extent to which this changed during the period stated.

Question 8

This was by far the most popular question. Some candidates were able to discuss several reasons for the collapse of communist rule in the GDR, even if they were less sure on Honecker's refusal to introduce reforms. However, there were many good answers which demonstrated a good knowledge and understanding of Honecker's rejection of the liberalisation suggested by Gorbachev before going on to consider the longer-term economic decline of the GDR or the impact of closer relations between the GDR and FRG on the collapse of communist rule. The best answers were able to make convincing judgements linking such factors directly to the SED's demise at the March 1990 elections.

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

Section A – Question (a)

- Read the sources carefully with regard to the specific demands of the questions
- Prioritise making valid inferences from the content of the sources that are relevant to the question, using brief quotes from the source to highlight your reasoning
- Back up these inferences by adding relevant contextual knowledge from beyond the source to explain or expand
- Move beyond generic or stereotypical comments on the nature, origin or purpose of the sources – look at the specific stance and/or purpose of the writer
- Avoid writing about the deficiencies of the source when assessing its value – concentrate instead on what it adds to the enquiry.

Section A – Question (b)

- Read the sources carefully with regard to the specific demands of the questions
- Prioritise making valid inferences from the content of the source that are relevant to the question, using brief quotes from the source to highlight your reasoning
- Back up these inferences by adding relevant contextual knowledge from beyond the source to explain, expand upon or challenge its evidence
- Be aware that the author is addressing a specific audience and purpose
- Try to distinguish between fact and opinion by using your contextual knowledge of the period
- In coming to a judgement, take account of the weight you may be able to give the author's evidence in the light of their position or purpose
- In assessing weight, it is perfectly permissible to consider what has been, perhaps, deliberately omitted from the source – however, simply stating that a source is limited because it does not cover other events or developments does not establish weight as no source can be comprehensive.

Section B

- Questions can be asked on any element of the Key Topics in the specification
- This is a Study in Depth so it is vital to have precise and detailed knowledge of the issues to score well – you are required to have both range and depth in your answer to access the higher levels
- Questions can be asked by targeting any of the five second order concepts – cause, consequence, continuity and change, similarity and difference, significance

- Pay full attention to the stated focus of the question – aim to explain this fully before considering alternatives to give the answer balance and enable you to come to a judgement
- Be sure to respect the time frame in a question – make sure that the material you use is both relevant and covers the chronology as fully as possible
- Try and show links between the issues raised in your answer, especially in coming to a judgement
- Use subject-specific terminology precisely and accurately.

Exemplars

Question 1 (a) – 0507001830068

This L3 answer demonstrates understanding of the source material and adds some contextual knowledge in support of the inferences it draws. It provides reasoning for its assertion of value to the enquiry.

Question 1 (b) also 0507001830068

This answer shows analysis of the source material by making several valid inferences relevant to the question and supporting these with accurate contextual knowledge. It does consider the limitations of the source in attempting to weigh the value of its evidence to the enquiry. It was given a L4 mark.

Question 2 (a) – 0507001760677

This L1 answer lacks engagement with the question, that is, the extent of emigration, also the content of the source is largely ignored. Though the candidate does include some accurate and relevant knowledge, it has limited linkage to the source material. There is an assertion of value with little substantiation.

Question 2 (b) also 0507001760677

This answer shows some engagement with the source material but it is not developed very far. Some contextual knowledge is added to this though it too lacks development. There is some consideration of the value and limitations of the source, but this is largely generic, and the judgement is asserted. It was given a L2 mark.

Question 3 0507002050943

This essay considers the reunification campaigns in Tibet, Guangdong and Xinjiang but lacks depth and development. There is little consideration of how the reunification campaigns may not have been successful and therefore, the candidate's judgement lacks conviction. It was given a low L3 mark.

Question 4 – 0507002091727

This essay focuses clearly on the ways in which participation in the Korean War both benefitted and did not benefit communist rule in China. The knowledge deployed by the candidate is mostly precise and accurate and is sufficient to meet most of the demands of the question. The candidate comes to a judgement that is based upon clear criteria and that is supported by the evidence. It was given a L4 mark.

Question 5 0507001760683

In this response, the candidate considers both the positive and negative effects of the communes on the lives of the peasantry. However, the material chosen is not always precisely matched to the enquiry and in general, it lacks depth and a little accuracy. It achieved a L3 mark.

Question 6 0507001760667

This essay does attempt to focus on the question and includes some accurate and relevant material, but it is one-sided, having no consideration of any democratic features of the GDR, and lacks depth in its analysis. It achieved a mark at the top of L2.

Question 7 0507001760686

This L2 response contains some accurate and relevant knowledge but is very underdeveloped and does not address the concept of change that is specified in the question.

Question 8 05007001760674

Here the candidate has a good knowledge and understanding of the reasons for the collapse of communism in the GDR, which is sufficient to meet most of the demands of the question. Key issues relevant to the question are explored and the judgement is supported by the evidence deployed. It was given a L4 mark.