



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2022

Pearson Edexcel

In GCE History (8HI0/2G)

Paper 2: Depth study

Option 2G.1: The rise and fall of fascism in Italy, c1911–46

Option 2G.2: Spain, 1930–78:
republicanism, Francoism and the re-
establishment of democracy

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Introduction

It was pleasing to see candidates able to engage effectively across the ability range in this first summer examination series after the disruption of the pandemic with the AS Level Paper 2G which covers the options: The rise and fall of fascism in Italy, c1911-46 (2G.1), and Spain, 1930-78: republicanism, Francoism and the re-establishment of democracy (2G.2). 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.

In comparison to previous series, candidates are beginning to cope better with Section A and most candidates are able to comprehend, select and summarise from the source material. Most are able to make relevant comments using the provenance. However, some candidates are still not clear on what is meant by 'value' and 'weight' in the context of source analysis and evaluation. In this series, performance in Section A was also affected 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 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.

In Section B, in this series, most responses had an analytical focus and there were very few that were wholly descriptive essays which were devoid of analysis and, for the most part, responses were soundly structured. The most common weakness in Section B essays was a lack of knowledge and especially precise knowledge applied to the question. Some candidates did not focus on the time period set. It is important that candidates read the question carefully and note the time period before planning and writing their answers. This avoids mistakes that undermine performance. It is also important to realise that Section A and 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.

The candidates' performance on individual questions is considered in the next section.

Question 1(a)

The vast majority of candidates were entered for 2G.1 and answered this question. Most candidates understood the question and were able to comprehend the source and comment on what it revealed about Mussolini's attitude to the Catholic Church in 1921, and hence the move to the right by the fascists at this time. There were some well-focused responses that drew out inferences about Mussolini's need to achieve Catholic support, as well as the role of nationalism and Catholicism in fascist ideology and ambitions. The best answers developed the inferences with well-selected context to establish their validity. Candidates would do well to remember that contextual knowledge does need to be used to explain and develop the inferences drawn from the source and not just to provide free-standing knowledge. Some candidates provided lengthy passages about the Mussolini's relationship with the Catholic Church after his appointment as prime minister which was not well-focused on the period in question. In other cases, candidates

did not use any contextual knowledge at all, and this did depress their achievement within the levels. Some candidates were able to use the attributes of the source effectively to develop their ideas about the value of the source from a speech to the Italian Chamber of Deputies, although some candidates mistakenly claimed that Mussolini was in charge at that time. Other candidates did no more than note the provenance from the caption. Candidates should consider what value lies in the provenance of the source and comment upon that. 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: 0507001774712 (part a only)

This is a secure level 3 response. It is fully focused on the question and draws put a number of developed inferences that are supported and explained by good contextual knowledge. There is good evaluation in the final paragraph.

Question 1 (b)

Candidates understood the source material and were able to select from it to develop some inferences about the reasons Mussolini's response to the Depression. There were some effective answers that weighed up the strengths and limitations of the source and used this as a basis to reach a judgement about the weight that should be attached to the source for the enquiry. Although some candidates attached free-standing knowledge to the response, many did use secure knowledge, particularly to challenge the claims in the source and in some cases to carry out a thorough interrogation of the evidence. With this source, candidates were able to construct successful interrogations by considering the selective nature of the material in the source and the more effective measures taken by Mussolini that the socialist author had decide to omit. In the most effective answers, candidates were able to use the provenance of the source in conjunction with the content of the source to develop criteria to judge the weight of the source as test this with claims in the source.

Doc ID: 0507001774712 (part b only)

This is a level 4 response. It demonstrates a secure understanding of the values and concerns of the society and time from which the source is drawn. It interrogates the evidence effectively using secure context. It tests the validity of the claims and reaches judgements.

Question 2 (a)

A small minority of candidates were entered for 2G.2. Candidates were able to understand the source and the focus of the question on the reasons for the removal of the monarchy in Spain in 1931. The most effective responses developed inferences from the source material and integrated the source with their knowledge of the conditions. Candidates commented on Alphonso's desires to avoid civil war and the significance of the elections in his decision. There were some effective comments on the value of the source based on the nature of the source as a Manifesto from the departing king.

Doc ID: 0507002413158 (part a only)

This is a strong Level 3 response. It uses the provenance of the source and its nature and purpose as the basis of the evaluation. It draws out a number of inferences and develops them with good contextual knowledge. It therefore achieves level 3 in all bullet points.

Question 2 (b)

There were some good responses to this question in which candidates made effective use of the source and were able to develop valid reasons for attributing weight to it. In some cases, candidates did not engage with the provenance of the source and simply repeated it from the caption or engaged in speculation about the writer's opinions without looking for evidence to support their ideas from the source. The better responses were able to refer to Posedas' relative objectivity, with his broad support for land reform and his obvious awareness of its shortcomings. Most candidates showed good knowledge of the context of the source. The better ones applied this effectively to inferences drawn from the source.

Doc ID: 0507002413158 (part b only)

This is a secure level 4 response. The candidate makes relevant comments about the provenance to establish Posadas' credentials. It includes a series of inferences about farmers' attitudes to the land reform that are carefully reasoned and developed with contextual knowledge. The comments on what is missing from the source is rather weaker evaluation evaluation.

Question 3

This was one of the more popular essay questions on the paper. Most candidates were able to address the question of threats to Giolitti and consider a range of factors, including the rise of socialism [the given factor], the challenge of nationalism, the issue of the Catholics and social and economic problems. A small number of candidates did not take note of the dates focused their answer on the post war crisis. These responses were not relevant to the question. The best answers were able to establish criteria for assessing significance and then assess the various threats to Giolitti in the light of these criteria and consider the relative significance of the threat of the rise of socialism. Some candidates had good knowledge that they used effectively to support their response. However, there were too many candidates whose knowledge was limited and imprecise.

Doc ID: 0507001774713 (Q3 only)

This is a level 4 entry response. It has focus on the question. It develops an valid criteria for judging significance, for example in considering what Giolitti himself considered to be the most significant threats. It needs more focus on the rise of socialism to achieve a secure level 4.

Question 4

This question was the most popular essay question on the paper. Most candidates had reasonable knowledge of the policies towards youth and were able to consider how effective they were in indoctrinating youth. Some excellent responses considered the difference between indoctrinating to worship Mussolini and the levels of support that were achieved for the fascist party. Candidates examined policies in education and youth groups and the cult of Il Duce. Many considered the difference in the effectiveness of indoctrination in the north and south and used opposition as one factor in assessing effectiveness.

Doc ID: 0507001759962 (Q4 only)

This is a top level 4 response. It has an explicit analytical focus on the question. It has good range and the knowledge is well selected and deployed effectively to address the question. Valid criteria are selected and substantiated.

Question 5

This was a popular question and produced a range of answers across the different levels. Most candidates displayed some knowledge of the topic and were able to construct the answer to focus on causation. Most candidates contrasted the relations with Britain and France with other motivations such as the desire for empire and the resources it could provide and the need to revenge Adowa. Some candidates had limited knowledge and were unable to focus effectively in the question. Candidates do need to be aware of the precise timeline of events in Mussolini's foreign policy. This avoids muddling events and making claims about events that had not then happened, a factor which has a negative impact on the quality of argument.

Doc ID: 0507001949962 (Q5 only)

This is a level 4 entry response. It has focus on the question and a clear argument – that Mussolini expected Britain and France to allow the invasion. There are occasional errors, such as reference to the treaty of London when the candidate clearly means the Stresa Front. The conclusion is more of a summary than a supported judgement.

Question 6

This was a popular question in Section B for 2G.2. Most candidates were knowledgeable about the differences in the lives of women in the Nationalist and Republican zones in the Spanish Civil War and were able to contrast a comparative response considering both similarities and differences. Candidates considered social lives, role in the economy, marriage and abortion and role in the war, with some women in the Republican zone joining the fighting whereas women in the Nationalist zone played supportive roles in women's groups and

Doc ID: 05070012413163 (Q6 only)

This is a secure level 4 response with a clear focus on the question. It has explicit and sustained focus on the second order concept – similarity and difference. It has good range and excellent detail. It has an effective conclusion weighing up the two sides of the argument.

Question 7

There was only 1 response to this question.

Question 8

There was only 1 response to this question.

Paper Summary

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

Section A

Value of Source Question (1(a)/2(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
- 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 revise thoroughly and ensure that they have good knowledge to draw upon in addressing the essay question. 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
- Try to explore links between issues to make the structure flow more logically and the arguments more integrated.