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Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2021

Pearson Edexcel International A Level

History

International Advanced Subsidiary

Paper 1: Depth Study with Interpretations

Option 1B: Russia in Revolution, 1881–1917

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## Principal Examiner Report

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### WHI01 B : Russia in Revolution: 1881-1917

The entry for this paper was relatively small. Candidates chose two questions from four, with the most popular being Question 1, followed by Question 3, then 4 and finally 2.

#### Question 1

Candidates who answered this question were able to consider the issue regarding the positive impact of both Tsars. Many decided that the negatives out-weighted the positives and made judgements accordingly. There was focus on the impact of abolishing the Poll Tax and the creation of the Peasants' Bank. On the negative side, it was the abandonment of previous reforms and repression that were mostly focused on.

#### Question 2

Candidates who answered this question tended to agree with the issue raised by the question. However, there was some appreciation of policies that were popular, e.g. land policies, new agricultural techniques and educational reform. Nevertheless, his policies of moving peasants and his unpopular attempts at reform of local government were judged to be more significant.

#### Question 3

Most candidates who answered this question considered a range of factors in relation to the issue raised by the question. Understanding of the strikes was, in many cases, thorough, though it a few it was generalised. Many saw the war as a key factor, suggesting that had it not had should an impact maybe the situation in February 1917 might not have happened.

#### Question 4

Many candidates really focused on the issue raised by the question. Poor decision making by the Provisional Government was thoroughly analysed as a factor in it being overthrown. There was also consideration of the role of Lenin, Trotsky and Bolshevik support. Many saw the inter-connection between the two sides and this informed their judgements.

Points to consider:

- This is a 'Depth study with Interpretations' which means that knowledge on it 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 is the most 'important' or 'significant' without explaining the basis upon which that judgment has been made.

