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Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2019

Pearson Edexcel GCE
In History (8HI0) Paper 1H

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Introduction

It was pleasing to see candidates able to engage effectively across the ability range in this, AS Level paper 1H.

The paper is divided into three sections. Section A comprises a choice of essays that assess understanding of the period in depth (AO1) by targeting the second order concepts of cause and/or consequence. Section B offers a further choice of essays, targeting any of the second order concepts of cause, consequence, change and continuity, similarity and difference, and significance. Section C contains a compulsory question which is based on two given extracts. It assesses analysis and evaluation of historical interpretations in context (AO3). Candidates in the main appeared to organise their time effectively, although there were some cases of candidates not completing one of the three responses within the time allocated. Examiners did note a number of scripts that posed some problems with the legibility of hand writing. Examiners can only give credit for what they can read.

Of the three sections of Paper 1, candidates are generally more familiar with the essay sections, and in sections A and B most candidates were well prepared to write, or to attempt, an analytical response. Stronger answers clearly understood the importance of identifying the appropriate second order concept that was being targeted by the question. A minority of candidates, often otherwise knowledgeable, wanted to focus on causes and engage in a main factor/other factors approach, even where this did not necessarily address the demands of the conceptual focus. Candidates in the main were able to apply their knowledge and understanding in a manner suited to the different demands of questions in these two sections in terms of the greater depth of knowledge required where section A questions targeted a shorter-period, as compared to the more careful selection generally required for the section B questions covering broader timespan.

Candidates do need to formulate their planning so that there is an argument and a counter argument within their answer; some candidates lacked sufficient treatment of these. The generic mark scheme clearly indicates the four bullet-pointed strands which are the focus for awarding marks and centres should note how these strands progress through the levels. Candidates do need to be aware of key dates, as identified in the specification, and ensure that they draw their evidence in responses from the appropriate time period.

In Section C, the strongest answers demonstrated a clear focus on the need to discuss different arguments given within the two extracts, clearly recognising these as historical interpretations. Such responses tended to offer comparative analysis of the merits of the different views, exploring the validity of the arguments offered by the two historians in the light of the evidence, both from the within the extracts, and candidates' own contextual knowledge. Such responses tended to avoid attempts to examine the extracts in a manner more suited to AO2, assertions of the inferiority of an extract on the basis of it offering less factual evidence, or a drift away from the specific demands of the question to the wider taught topic.

8H10_1H_Q01

Question 1 was a popular choice with candidates in Section A of the paper. The majority of candidates were able to engage with the conceptual demands of the question sufficiently, and apply appropriate knowledge in order to allow them to access the higher levels. The main discriminator in the quality of responses was the knowledge offered, particularly on the given issue. A significant minority of responses demonstrated limited knowledge and/or understanding of the issue of changing industrial relations, or the given reason of the decline in traditional industries. Thankfully, most responses were able to explain the problems facing traditional industries in the immediate years after the First World War, and link these to strikes in the 1920s. Knowledge of the General Strike was more secure than the developments in the earlier post-war period, and relatively few mentioned the Triple Alliance. More were able to link the General Strike to the political response, such as the Trades Disputes Act of 1927. Most could offer some analysis of the decline of the staple industries, with the strongest able to explore the relationship between the fortunes of this and other factors, such as the impact of the war and the government response, and relate these to change in industrial relations. Other commonly featuring events and issues were the wider changing economic conditions, such as the recession of 1920-1, the Geddes Axe, government policies such as the return to the Gold Standard, the Great Depression, the Jarrow March, and rearmament prior to the Second World War. A small minority also gave consideration to the alternative representation given to worker interests by continued development of the Labour Party, and relations between the party and the union movement. Within these, the ability to focus material to the demands of the question was a discriminating factor in performance. In general, responses offered less convincing material on the latter part of the period. Stronger responses tended to be more able to explore the relationship between different factors in shaping industrial relations, e.g. relating the decline of the traditional industries to the impact of the war and the actions of government, or contrasting the decline of the heavily unionised staple industries with the growth of newer industries. Those who were able to precisely examine and substantiate arguments as to the extent to which the decline was the main

reason were most successful, offering convincing attempts to ascertain the way in which such reasons contributed and their relative importance. Such responses tended to show clear critical reasoning, e.g. offering judgements such as that the decline of the staple industries was the underlying reason why industrial relations were changes as it undermined the foundations of the unions, but that the failure of strike action and the government response marked a fundamental shift in relations.

8H10_1H_Q02

This was a popular question within Section A, and it produced a range of responses which were usually well-informed, and in the main offered some degree of analysis. The main factor determining the quality of responses was often the ability to focus material towards the demands of the question, in particular the given second-order concept of consequence. Whilst there were examples of responses offering limited material, less successful responses were often those which did not sufficiently engage with the question, usually in the form of providing reasons why healthcare improved, or even reasons why the NHS was created. Most candidates were able to consider improvements in the health of the nation, with many offer extensive material on various aspects within this, as well as other consequences such as the rising cost of healthcare and the demands on the exchequer, the so-called 'dandruff syndrome', improvements in the technology associated with healthcare, employment, the impact on political consensus and improvements for women. Better responses tended to be more secure in relating these clearly to the creation of the National Health Service. Many strong responses were also clear in offering comment to qualify the extent to which these were consequences of the creation of the NHS, e.g. at least acknowledging that the creation of the NHS was only partly responsible for political consensus. Such responses were obviously more successful when candidates were able to do so without diverging from the question to, say, examine other factors causing, say, an improvement in healthcare. High performing responses were also more likely to critically assess the relative importance of the consequences they offered, e.g. attempting to quantify gains in health through statistics on reductions in particular diseases, or examining the extent to which costs rose across the given period.

8H10_1H_Q03

This was a popular choice of question within Section B. The vast majority of candidates were able to engage with the conceptual demands of the question. The main discriminators in the quality of responses was the ability to focus consistently on the second-order concept (a comparison of how different the two given periods were), and the quality of supporting

material, particularly on the earlier, inter-war period. The majority of responses were secure enough in their focus, knowledge and understanding, quality of judgement and organisation to access level three or above. In general, candidates seemed more secure on developments relating to race and immigration in the period after the Second World War, such as government legislation, Windrush and new Commonwealth immigration, examples of prejudice, race riots and political interventions, notably those of Enoch Powell. Responses tended to offer less material on the inter-war period, understandably so to a point, although as noted, in some cases these limitations hampered the quality of responses. More commonly cited events and issues in this period included the treatment of foreign seamen after the First World War, legislation such as the Aliens Restriction Act, and the issue of anti-Semitism in the 1930s. Stronger answers tended to make direct comparisons between the two periods which were developed to explore the extent of differences. A smaller but significant number of candidates emphasised both positives and negatives, e.g. arguing that there were significant positive changes in relation to integration, anti-discrimination legislation and attitudes, as well as continued problems, an approach which was successful where linked to the demands of the question.

8H10_1H_Q04

Question 4 produced a broad range of responses, and the majority were able to engage with the conceptual demands of the question, focusing to some extent on the extent to which there was more continuity than change in popular culture and entertainment in the years 1918-79. Where responses were less successful, they tended to either be hampered by limited knowledge of the relevant issues, a lack of clear definition of what constituted popular culture, or were less able to develop what they did know within a chronological framework suited to an analysis of continuity/change over the period 1918-79. Overall responses were less convincing when dealing with the earlier part of the period. There was also some chronological confusion in a minority of responses, e.g. seeing television as a significant advance prior to the Second World War. Thankfully, the vast majority of responses were able to make use of accurate and relevant knowledge from a range of issues. Common issues referred to included cinema, television, music, radio, and, in particular, the development of youth culture from the 1950s. Many of the stronger responses took a thematic approach, e.g. structuring responses around a selection of the above, then exploring within these points the extent to which there was continuity/change. There was greater focus on, and seemingly stronger knowledge and understanding of, developments in the latter part of the period. Perhaps reflecting this, candidates in general seemed more confident in examining change than continuity. Some responses did seem located somewhat in

contemporary experiences of certain aspects of culture, e.g. references to the superiority of televised sport which reflected the 21st experiences, rather than those of the 1950s to 1970s.

8H10_1H_Q05

Most candidates were able to access the higher two levels, generally by recognising and explaining the arguments in the two extracts, and building on this with own knowledge. The strongest responses tended to offer a comparative analysis of the views, discussing and evaluating these in the light of contextual knowledge. Most candidates were able to identify the differences between Extract 1 and Extract 2, such as the emphasis Goodlad places on measures facilitated the upward mobility of many ordinary Britons, such as the purchase of council houses and shares, set against the emphasis Bronstein and Harris place on the deterioration in public services and the problems faced by the poorest sections of society. It was pleasing to see that few responses became side-tracked in an attempted analysis of the provenance of the extracts, although a small minority went into issues of reliability of the extracts as 'sources', without fully exploring them as interpretations. Where candidates were less successful, this tended to be down to insufficient use of one or other of the extracts, or more commonly, limited integration of contextual knowledge. A minority of candidates at times tended to select quotations from the extracts which were to some degree removed from the wider context of the argument offered, and thus in some cases suggested the extract argued something it didn't. In the main though, candidates generally explored both interpretations and considered some of the key points included in these, such as increased share ownership, right to buy, reduction of inflation, set against issues such as the growth of income inequality, persistent unemployment and difficulties in public services. Many candidates seemed ready to offer arguments as to the negatives and positives. The stronger of these were sufficiently developed in terms of the arguments and evidence of the extracts, and offered a thorough examination of issues, e.g. going beyond simpler claims to Thatcher's impact having been negative for the poor and positive for those who were already wealthy, or similar arguments relating to the North and South. Many candidates were able to explore the extent to which the impact was positive or negative within issues, drawing on the extracts and contextual knowledge, e.g. examining the extent to which measures against trade unionism was a negative for workers in unionised industries, or a necessary correction after the experience of the 1970s.

Paper Summary

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

Section A/B responses:

Features commonly found in responses which were successful within the higher levels were:

- Candidates paying close attention to the date ranges in the question
- Sufficient consideration given to the issue in the question (e.g. main factor), as well as some other factors
- Explain their judgement fully – this need not be in an artificial or abstract way, but demonstrate their reasoning in relation to the concepts and topic they are writing about in order to justify their judgements
- A careful focus on the second-order concept targeted in the question
- Give consideration to timing, to enable themselves to complete all three question with approximately the same time given over to each one
- An appropriate level, in terms of depth of detail and analysis, as required by the question – e.g. a realistic amount to enable a balanced and rounded answer on breadth questions.

Common issues which hindered performance:

- Pay little heed to the precise demands of the question, e.g. write about the topic without focusing on the question, or attempt to give an answer to a question that hasn't been asked – most frequently, this meant treating questions which targeted other second-order concepts as causation questions
- Answer a question without giving sufficient consideration to the given issue in the question (e.g. looking at other causes or consequences, with only limited reference to that given in the question)

- Answers which only gave a partial response, e.g. a very limited span of the date range, or covered the stated cause/consequence, with no real consideration of other issues
- Assertion of change, causation, sometimes with formulaic repetition of the words of the question, with limited explanation or analysis of how exactly this was a change, cause, of the issue within the question.
- Judgement is not reached, or not explained
- A lack of detail

Section C responses:

Features commonly found in responses which were successful within the higher levels:

- Candidates paying close attention to the precise demands of the question, as opposed to seemingly pre-prepared material covering the more general controversy as outlined in the specification
- Thorough use of the extracts; this need not mean using every point they raise, but a strong focus on these as views on the question
- A confident attempt to use the two extracts together, e.g. consideration of their differences, attempts to compare their arguments, or evaluate their relative merits
- Careful use of own knowledge, e.g. clearly selected to relate to the issues raised within the sources, confidently using this to examine the arguments made, and reason through these in relation to the given question; at times, this meant selection over sheer amount of knowledge
- Careful reading of the extracts, to ensure the meaning of individual statements and evidence within these were used in the context of the broader arguments made by the authors

- Attempts to see beyond the stark differences between sources, e.g. consideration of the extent to which they disagreed, or attempts to reconcile their arguments

Common issues which hindered performance:

- Limited use of the extracts, or an imbalance in this, e.g. extensive use of one, with limited consideration of the other
- Limited comparison or consideration of the differences between the given interpretations
- Using the extracts merely as sources of support
- Arguing one extract is superior to the other on the basis that it offers more factual evidence to back up the claims made, without genuinely analysing the arguments offered
- Heavy use of own knowledge, or even seemingly pre-prepared arguments, without real consideration of these related to the arguments in the sources
- Statements or evidence from the source being used in a manner contrary to that given in the sources, e.g. through misinterpretation of the meaning of the arguments, or lifting of detail without thought to the context of how it was applied within the extract
- A tendency to see the extracts as being polar opposites, again seemingly through expectation of this, without thought to where there may be degrees of difference, or even common ground