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Examiners' Report  
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2019

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Level  
In History (WHI01)

Paper 1: Depth Study with Interpretations

Option 1B: Russia in Revolution, 1881–1917

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## **Principal Examiner Report 2019**

### **iA Level History (1B: Russia in Revolution 1881-1917)**

#### **WHI01: International Advanced Subsidiary**

It is important that centres take on board some generic comments which are based on the marking of this summer's cohort, and consider and apply these when preparing candidates for future examinations in these options.

- WHI01 is both a study in depth and a study of interpretations, and it is necessary for candidates to do both, at all levels in the mark scheme, in order to score marks. Ignoring the stated view in the question, and merely writing information that may be relevant to the general focus of the question does not fully meet the criteria for Level 1, and consequently none of the other levels. Even at Level 1 the mark scheme expects simple or generalised consideration of the stated view in the question. Some candidates paid very little attention to the stated view (ignoring it completely or sometimes only referring to it in the conclusion) and narrated or described other information that was either relevant or not to the actual question.
- There was very little evidence seen of planning. As the examination is two hours long, implying that candidates might divide that time equally between the two essays they choose, it would seem sensible to devote some time (possibly no more than 10 minutes per question) to planning the structure of the answer to each question. That would hopefully ensure that when the answer is written the stated view is considered (Level 2, 3 and 4 all require, to varying degrees, understanding, analysis and exploration of the given view) and then other factors/views can follow, which will then allow the candidate to establish some criteria by which they are able to consider the importance, or not, of the given view and make some judgements. Those candidates who planned (this appeared on their examination script before they answered the question) invariably scored better than candidates who had not planned. Planned answers tended to score at the top of Level 3 and into, and including the top of Level 4, whereas unplanned answers meandered and judgements tended to be stated, rather than supported by valid criteria, and often achieved marks at the Level 2 and Level 3 boundary or below.
- The need to stress to candidates that in examination situations they must read the question carefully, and not take the question as an opportunity to write all they know about the topic, or answer a question they would have preferred that is near to the actual question, but not the actual question.
- There was some evidence of candidates running out of time, but they were very few. Impressing the need to plan essays in the examination is surely the remedy to this problem.

### **Option 1B Russia in Revolution 1881-1917**

- Question 1, 2 3 proved to be the most popular.
- In question 1 candidates were well versed in benefits afforded the Russian people by Tsarist rule, but were also able to counter the benefits with significant limitations, with many concluding that not all gained.
- While question 2 was popular with many candidates discussing the October Manifesto as well as other consequences, some saw the question as an opportunity to narrate the events of Bloody Sunday.
- In question 3 many candidates were well versed on the wide ranging impact of the First World War and decisions made by the Tsar. However, some candidates saw the question as an opportunity to list the reasons for the February 1917 revolution.
- In question 4 many candidates were well versed in the reasons why the Provisional Government lost power, but were not clear about the problems in agriculture, and made passing reference to the issue of not resolving the 'land' issue.