



Pearson
Edexcel

Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2019

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Level
In History (WHI04)

Paper 4: International Study with Historical
Interpretations

Option 1D: The Cold and Hot War in Asia,
1945–90

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

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for all papers can be found on the website at:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html>

Summer 2019

Publications Code WHI04_1D_1906_ER

All the material in this publication is copyright

© Pearson Education Ltd 2019

Introduction

Please note: that it is recommended that centres look at a selection of Principal Examiner Reports from across the different options within WHI04 1A-1D and previous series to get an overall sense of examiner feedback, centre approaches and candidate achievement. It is also highly recommended that centres read the general Introduction and Section A and B introductions in the Principal Examiner Reports for June 2017. These generic introductions outline the assessment requirements for WHI04 and give an indication of the skills required.

Centres may wish to refer to the *Getting Started* guide that is to be found on the IAL History Pearson Edexcel website. It is also useful to take note of the indicative content in the mark schemes.

Further resources that may be of use are the *Applying Criteria* and *Developing Student's Understanding of Historical Interpretations* documents to be found on the Pearson Edexcel History GCE website along with the Principal Examiner Reports for paper 1 of the Pearson Edexcel History GCE. The *Applying Criteria* document gives guidance with regard to the application of criteria for the different AOs tested at A level. The paper 1 Reports will be particularly useful for exemplification of AO3 interpretations skills as will the *Historical Interpretations* document (but please be aware that there are slight differences within the general Level descriptors of the mark scheme).

Although much of the feedback for the 2019 series will be similar to that of 2018 there were key characteristics that were apparent this year and these will be discussed below. There has been a further increase in entries since 2018 and it is clear that the majority of centres have taken note of the feedback provided in previous Principal Examiner reports. However, this summer there was an increase in candidates unable to access marks above low Level 4 in Q1 because they failed to reach a judgement on the view stated in the question and an increase in the number of responses that just seemed to include everything the candidates had learned about a topic. To reach the higher Levels in Q1 centres are reminded that a judgement on the interpretations presented in the extracts is required and that to reach Level 5 in Section B for bullet point 2 knowledge should be '*precisely selected*'.

Candidates in general produce interesting responses that it is a pleasure to read and reward. As in previous series candidates are usually very well prepared in relation to knowledge of the specification and centres are to be commended for this. Candidates have good knowledge and they often include material which is thought provoking. Many responses were well-informed and well-written. However, as stated above there does need to be more discrimination in the selection and deployment of knowledge in both Section A and Section B.

Once again there was an improvement in the understanding and appreciation of the skills required for the Section A Historical Interpretation question which assesses AO3/AO1 with many fewer responses being awarded Level 1 and Level 2 marks. However, some candidates are still not using the extracts as the basis of their response and candidates do need to reach a judgement to access all Levels.

Section B responses were also generally stronger with many more responses clearly showing the qualities of Level 4, and indeed Level 5. However, lower Level responses continue to exhibit the weaknesses highlighted in previous series in regard to a lack of focus on the wording of the question and/or the second-order concept being targeted

along with a tendency for candidates to write about everything they know rather than to select material relevant to the question.

Once again it is worth noting that the responses are marked using a 'best-fit' process. Each bullet point strand within the generic mark scheme is considered to create an overall sense of Level and a mark applied within the Level. If a response has qualities which exemplify a variety of Levels or a strand is missing then this will be reflected by applying a 'best-fit' Level and mark. For responses which do not address an aspect of a particular strand, for example reaching a judgement in bullet point 3 for Q1, this will be reflected in the mark rewarded.

There were fewer candidates who wrote responses which seem to thread their knowledge into the language of the mark schemes this year but there are still some centres that are clearly advising candidates to do so. The descriptors reflect the qualities examiners would expect to see in an essay answering the question set rather than a scaffold on which responses should be built. It is the examiner who determines whether criteria are valid or if the analysis is sustained rather than the candidate by asserting 'so it can be seen by the valid criteria I have used...' or 'In conclusion, this sustained analysis...'. This does not necessarily add value to the response and can be detrimental if this assertion is clearly not substantiated. This is also the case in responses that assert 'It is a compelling argument...' when that argument is not well organised or even contradicts itself. Some candidates even begin each new point with this statement clearly writing this in a formulaic way with little understanding of what they are actually arguing.

It is pleasing to see that most candidates were, in general, clearly aware of both the structure and the timing of the examination paper; there was little evidence on this paper of candidates having insufficient time to answer questions from Sections A and B. There were more candidates this year producing responses of a similar length and quality on both sections. General candidate performance on each Section and specific performance on individual questions for Paper 1D are considered below.

Section A

Although there continues to be fewer candidates writing responses at Level 1 and Level 2 for the AO3/AO1 interpretation Q1, this year the improvement seen last year did seem to stall a little. This was particularly due to candidates

- a) using the extracts to exemplify a standard Section B (AO1) style essay in response to the view being put forward
or
- b) using the extracts to exemplify a standard Section B (AO1) style essay in response to a generalised understanding of the key topic
or, particularly,
- c) applying Strand 1 and Strand 2 skills to the two extracts but then just summarising the two interpretations in a conclusion with virtually no attempt to come to a judgement on the view.

Centres should note that this is an AO3/AO1 question with the majority of the marks being awarded for application of skills in relation to AO3 historical interpretations and that from Level 1 a judgement on the stated view is required.

However, having stated the concerns above, some high Level responses reflected an outstanding ability to address the viewpoint through superb analysis of the

interpretations presented while integrating detailed historical knowledge in the time provided. The best responses are invariably those that are built around the views expressed in the extracts throughout the response. These responses were often thoughtful discussions of the viewpoint in the question and resulted in interesting answers that were very enjoyable to read.

The question requires candidates to make a judgement on a stated viewpoint, through the analysis of two extracts from historical works which address the historical issue and their own knowledge of the historical debate. It is worth reminding centres that the generic mark scheme clearly indicates the three bullet-pointed strands which are the focus for awarding marks:

- interpretation and analysis of extracts
- deployment of knowledge of issues related to the debate
- evaluation of, and judgement about, the interpretations

The best responses reflected the qualities of each strand outlined in the Level 4 and Level 5 descriptors. However, it is worth noting that, although some candidates now clearly better understand what is required and write answers that can achieve Level 4, there are many candidates failing to reach high Level 4 or Level 5 because they are writing very long responses that include everything they know and develop a confused or contradictory argument/overall judgement as a result. This results in both an imbalanced response with an over-emphasis on Strand 2 and difficulty in accessing high Level 4 or Level 5 marks. There is sufficient time to plan a response of sufficient length which interprets the extracts with 'confidence and discrimination' and in which the knowledge is 'sufficient' and 'precisely selected and deployed' to explore the view under debate.

There are also some candidates who are able to access Level 4/Level 5 for Strand 1 interpretation and analysis of the extracts but who either do not deploy knowledge of the issues related to the debate or do not come to a judgement in relation to the view in the question. As stated above many responses reflected a structure that analysed Extract 1 and Extract 2 with some skill but then wrote a conclusion which just restated an understanding of the view in Extract 1 and the view in Extract 2 without coming to a judgment at all - so making it difficult to reward Strand 3 of the mark scheme.

Here is an example from WHI04_1B of a conclusion that just summarises the interpretations in the extracts:

In conclusion, the view that the diplomatic of 1905-13 created the conditions that explain the transformation of the June/July crisis into a general war is both supported and challenged by the extracts. Extract 1 largely agrees with this view as it illustrates that the crises led to the alliance system and the arms race. On the other hand, Extract 2 believes that these factors were insufficient for war and the events of the June/July crisis alone led to war. The absence of Franz Ferdinand proving to be important.

This conclusion from WHI04_1D, however, gives a judgement on the interpretations presented in the extracts:

In conclusion, I disagree to a small extent with the view that MacArthur was dismissed because of his interference in President Truman's proposed Korean peace initiative. Although MacArthur's rash behaviour and military insubordination

frustrated Truman and contributed to their tense relationship, I disagree with Halberstam's interpretation that it was the deciding factor for his dismissal. It was instead, as Stone claims, the threat that MacArthur's popularity in Washing posed to Truman's vulnerable position that made Truman feel as if MacArthur's dismissal was the only way to ensure his authority, solidify his role as 'Commander-in-Chief', and shield himself from the criticisms of militantly anti-communist Republican opposition.

A few candidates exhibited good knowledge of the debate central to the overall focus of the question but ignored the extracts altogether, perhaps referring to them briefly to exemplify a point being made.

There are still a few candidates whose responses reflect the qualities outlined in the lower Levels of the mark scheme but this is becoming much rarer. These responses often showed the following characteristics:

- answering the question without reference to the extracts at all or only using the views implicitly
- paraphrasing the extracts or just stringing together quotations from the extracts using connecting words or terms
- do not include any relevant historical knowledge to support the analysis
- use AO2 skills of source analysis to evaluate the extracts with regard to aspects of provenance.

Candidates at all Levels are still tend towards using the term 'source' rather than 'extract' when referring to the material under discussion. If candidates are to see the material as interpretations, rather than sources of evidence, centres should encourage candidates to refer to Extract 1 or Extract 2, interpretations or the names of the authors. The most successful responses are often those that use the names of the authors as they can stand back from the content of the extracts and clearly show an '*understanding of the nature of historical debate*' (Level 5). Candidates should be encouraged to see the sources evaluated in WHI02 and WHI03 as the building blocks which create the interpretations and views being discussed in WHI04. One extract will mainly reflect the view given in the question statement while the other will mainly reflect a counter argument to be discussed in the course of coming to an overall judgement.

Pleasingly there was much less formulaic discussion of historiographical debates, in some cases unconnected to the extracts, but as in the previous Reports please note the guidance given in the *Getting Started* document: *Students are not expected to be familiar with the writing of the selected historians but they should be familiar with the issues that make the question controversial. Reference to the works of name historians, other than the material in the extracts provided is not expected but students may consider historians' viewpoints in framing their arguments.*

It was a little frustrating once again to find that many candidates appeared to create their discussion by reference to only the first few lines of each extract and so lost an opportunity to develop key points made later in the extracts. Candidates have sufficient time to consider the extracts carefully, to plan and to draw out a variety of different key points in order to compare and contrast the interpretations presented. Finally, centres should note that the response is set up for candidates to discuss the view put forward in the question in relation to the views being expressed in the extracts rather than using the extracts to exemplify the debate. The most successful

candidates are those that build their response around the debate that has been set up by the extracts.

Q1

Candidates are almost universally well-prepared for paper 1D and there were some very good responses that were a pleasure to read. The quality of responses covered a wider range this series but most candidates were able to use the extracts to create a discussion of the reason why General MacArthur was dismissed in April 1951. There were some candidates who did little more than paraphrase or describe the information given in the extracts and there were still a few responses that answered the question with either no reference or very limited reference to the extracts. Several responses seemed to treat the extracts as a side-issue that begrudgingly needed to be referenced before moving on to the real matter at hand. Centres are reminded that the majority of the marks to be awarded for Q1 are for the AO3 element of the mark scheme. At the higher Levels there were some excellent answers that were able to use the extracts to great effect in discussing the extracts in relation to the given view. In general candidates were more confident in analysing Extract 1 than Extract 2.

Most responses were able to contrast the view in Extract 1 that MacArthur was dismissed in April 1951 due to his deliberate attempts to undermine Truman's peace negotiations with the view in Extract 2 that it was MacArthur's interference in US domestic politics which was the real reason for MacArthur's dismissal. Some candidates were able to link the two with some picking up on Halberstam's statement that Truman was 'merely waiting for the right moment'. Other candidates were able to use both extracts to show that MacArthur's dismissal was the result of a longer term challenge by MacArthur to Truman's authority as Commander-in-Chief. These candidates were able to argue that either the communication with the Chinese or the letter to Martin was the catalyst for his departure.

Many candidates were able to use their contextual knowledge to explain and evaluate the views presented. Candidates used their knowledge of MacArthur's troubled relationship with Truman and arrogant attitude to support both extracts effectively. Many used the meeting on Wake Island as an example. Some candidates were able to use their knowledge of the impact of the Korean War on domestic politics in the US to show their understanding of the impact of the letter to Martin in Extract 2.

Section B

Well-informed candidates were able to respond to the focus of the question directly and to use the wording of the questions to create discussion and debate. There were some knowledgeable and well-organised responses. However, this summer there were a noticeable number of candidates who perhaps did not take time to plan their answers and consequently wrote very long but indiscriminate responses that did not really focus on the question asked. Once again, there was little evidence to suggest that the range and depth of essays were affected by the time taken to consider the two extracts in Section A.

It is important to note that questions can cover content which stretches across the key topics as well as within the key topics. In order to ensure that candidates are prepared to answer any question set centres should cover all the content outlined in the specification.

The question requires candidates to explore and discuss the given question while coming to an overall judgement. It is worth reminding centres that the generic mark scheme clearly indicates the four bullet-pointed strands which are the focus for awarding marks:

- analysis and exploration of key features and characteristics of the period in relation to the second-order conceptual demands of the question
- selection and deployment of knowledge
- substantiated evaluation and judgement
- organisation and communication of argument

Most candidates are clearly well-prepared and have good knowledge of the content of the specification with Strand 1 and Strand 2 often the strongest elements of the responses seen. However, this year, in particular, knowledgeable candidates often wrote detailed responses which included too much unfocussed supporting material and which often resulted in confused or contradictory arguments being developed that particularly affected Strand 4. Level 5 Strand 2 refers to 'sufficient knowledge precisely selected and deployed'. Good responses were also often unable to access Level 5 because of a lack of precision in the use of vocabulary when formulating an argument or establishing valid criteria. Some responses began every paragraph by saying 'x is significant to some extent...' or 'x is the main reason...' or began a conclusion by stating that 'I agree with the statement...' and then gave an overall judgement that contradicted this. Many responses begin with 'It is a compelling argument...' and then argue the opposite. It is important that judgements are substantiated and arguments developed with logic, coherence and precision.

Weaker responses were often those that did not address the question carefully, described the key features rather than explained or explored them, wrote a response set within the wrong time period or included major inaccuracies. Many candidates seemed to be prepared for specific potential set questions and edited these to 'fit' the focus of the question asked resulting in Level 3 responses that showed some relevance but were not really suited to the conceptual focus of the question. Candidates who took some time to plan responses with a clear line of argument were more likely to progress to the higher Levels. Also candidates who argue in their conclusion that a complex interaction of causes, factors etc should be taken into account are likely to be rewarded at the higher Levels if they show how these relate or consider relative significance based on supporting evidence discussed in the main body of the essay.

Q2

This was the less popular of the two questions but candidates who chose to answer the question on the contribution of General Giap to the success of the Viet Minh in the First Vietnam War often had excellent knowledge and were well prepared. Candidates were generally aware of the general contribution of Giap to the military victory and his specific role in the decisive battle for Dien Bien Phu. The relative importance was usually established by comparing Giap's contribution to the role of a number of other factors such as Ho Chi Minh, French military weakness, the post-war situation in Indo-China, the lack of popular support for Bao Dai and strength of nationalist cause in Vietnam. Candidates should be aware that it is difficult to reach the higher Levels of Strands 3 and 4 of the mark scheme in a causation question if they are unable to analyse in sufficient depth the contribution of the given factor. Many candidates wrote a very

short paragraph about Giap before discussing other factors. These responses often just asserted that the role of Ho Chi Minh was more important than General Giap with very little substantiation. The best responses were those that were able to establish the relative importance of Giap in relation to other factors or were able to demonstrate a complex interaction of factors. For example, some candidates were able to show that long-term factors created a difficult situation for the French but that a combination of French mistakes and Giap's military ability led to the French withdrawal after the siege of Dien Bien Phu.

Q3

This was the more popular question and there were many good responses with some interesting nuanced answers that were able to weigh up the success of Nixon's policies using different criteria. Most candidates were well prepared and far fewer candidates this year mixed up the chronology of events in Vietnam. Many candidates were able to deploy sufficient knowledge to produce secure Level 4 and Level 5 responses and there was less indiscriminate inclusion of knowledge this series. In support of success, candidates usually mentioned troop withdrawal, the 'madman' theory and the use of diplomacy with Vietnamisation, Operation Phoenix and the opening up of bombing operations further into south-east Asia being used as examples of failure. Weaker responses tended to describe and explain the success of some of the key features rather than exploring the extent to which the policies were successful. The best responses provided a nuanced response with a clear focus on whether the policies were **very** successful. Many of these were enjoyable to read.

Paper Summary

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

Section A (AO3/AO1)

- Candidates should come to an overall judgement with regard to the view stated in the question; it is not sufficient just to summarise the views presented in the extracts
- Candidates should use the time available to read both extracts carefully all the way through before planning their answer; the information in the extracts should be the foundation upon which the answer is constructed
- Candidates should make sure that they address the view specifically stated in the question preferably from the introductory paragraph; generic introductions related to generalised debates rarely gain rewards and waste candidate time
- Candidates should aim to interpret both extracts by analysing the issues raised and showing an understanding of the arguments presented by both authors
- Interpretations should be referred to as Extracts or by the author's name; the material presented are interpretations and not sources of evidence
- Candidates should select and deploy contextual knowledge in relation to the view being tested rather than including everything they know about the topic; failure to do so undermines all of the mark scheme Strands in the higher Levels.

Section B (AO1)

- Spending time planning helps to ensure the argument being presented is well organised; with an hour to answer the question there is sufficient time to plan well
- Candidates must provide more precise contextual knowledge as supporting evidence. Some Level 4 responses included too much information which led to contradiction and confusion in the overall argument being presented and could not move into Level 5
- Candidates should think carefully about the language they use to evaluate the second-order concepts being assessed; do not use 'to an extent' to mean both 'a little' and 'to a large degree' rather state the extent explicitly

- Use conclusions to state the judgement reached clearly and to show the relative significance of or the inter-relationship between key issues discussed in the main body of the essay; leave the examiner in no doubt as to what your judgement is
- Candidates should try to explore the links between issues in order to make the structure of the response flow more logically and to enable the integration of analysis
- The most effective answers are those that explore and discuss the specific question being asked; these responses consider argument and counter-argument to establish extent.