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Examiners' Report January 2010

GCSE History 5HA02 2B

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GCSE History 5HA02 2B

General comments

It was pleasing to see a good standard of responses from candidates in this first session of the new modular examination. Whilst it is undoubtedly the case that, after just one term's study, candidates often wrote with less sophistication than they would have at the end of two years, it is also true that the more focussed assessment approach used in a modular course brought advantages. Although candidates may have written less well, there were fewer who knew little or could not answer some of the questions than in the old linear examination.

The paper requires candidates to answer six questions in 75 minutes. It was surprising that some candidates managed to write at considerable length in this time. However, often some of the material provided was not focussed on the question. Relevance rather than length is the key to high marks. Examiners want to see that candidates know the material and can organise it effectively to answer the question set. There is only so far 'saturation bombing' will take candidates.

Centres should note that the amount of space provided in the booklet for answers, is more than we would expect any answer to take, not a recommendation of the amount candidates should write.

Despite the length of some answers, there was little indication of candidates having insufficient time to answer all the questions, though a little evidence of 'rushing'. It seemed that some centres had recommended their candidates to begin with Q3 as it carries the largest number of marks. Since the questions are not chronological this is a perfectly valid approach. However, as exam technique on the new specification grows, centres may feel less need to give this advice.

The approach to individual questions is considered in the reports on the separate options. An example from a candidate's response in the examination is given for each question. Please note that part answers only are given as exemplification, not full answers. However, a general summary of areas for improvement in the approach to some of the question types (which are common across the three options) may prove of benefit to centres.

- In Question 1(a) candidates tended to write at too great a length. It is sufficient to make an inference, support it from the source and move on. The reliability of the source is not a relevant issue
- In Question 1(c) candidates need to remember that the question is on effects. They should not give an account of the event mentioned in the question, but confine themselves to its impact.
- Similarly, in Question 1(d) answers should limit themselves to causes, not a description of the event or policy.
- In Question 3, not all four given factors need be addressed, but for those factors which are considered, candidates will only score high marks if they explain how those factors brought about the stated outcome. Highest marks require candidates to prioritise factors, which cannot be done merely by asserting that one was more important than the others.

5HA02B: Russia 1917-39

Question 1(a)

In this source-based question, candidates were asked to make inferences about the problems of the Provisional Government. Most candidates ignored the 'problems' aspect of the question and wrote about the Provisional Government in general. Where these answers could be interpreted as being about problems, they were allowed. The most obvious inferences from this source were that the problems were severe, or were self-induced.

Inferences are judgements which can be made and which the source does not state directly. So the key to answering this type of question is to make the inference and use the wording of the source only as support for an inference. An inference should not be made by using the words of the source, as that is likely to produce paraphrasing.

So candidates who stated that '*the Provisional Government was unable to take Russia out of the war*' were copying the source, not making valid inferences and were marked at Level 1. Whereas those candidates who argued that the Provisional Government's problems were so great that they would lead to its downfall because '*even if it wanted to, it could not make the sweeping changes that many hoped for*' were rewarded at Level 3.

On this question, many candidates brought in their own knowledge, either to make an inference or to provide a historical context. This is not a correct approach to the question. Both inferences and support must come from the source.



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Examiner Tip

To gain high marks, you must support your inference from the source. The best way to show that you are doing this is make a direct quote. Why not say '*I know this because it says ...*'?

(4) 5 Q01a

From this source, I can infer that the Provisional Government are the hardest to deal with more uprisings and problems ~~as~~ ^{as} it introduced freedom of speech. This means that people can voice ~~their~~ ^{their} complaints ^{more openly}. Additionally, the source suggests that the Provisional Government was not popular amongst Russia, that ~~they~~ ^{it was} ~~were~~ disliked as they did not provide the people with what they wanted. I can also infer that the Provisional Government ~~soon~~ ^{with controlling Russia} had more problems before this as the source says 'made Russia harder to govern'.


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Examiner Comments

This candidate has tried very hard to provide a supported inference. The first is that it is having to deal with uprisings and problems as it introduced freedom of speech. Had this been a little clearer (perhaps it means the problems were self-induced?) it would have been rewarded at Level 3. That last point is that it must previously have had problems, because now it had made 'Russia harder to govern'. This is dubious. However the answer also suggests that the government was not popular, though the support is not clear. So the answer was marked at Level 2. More clarity in the answer could easily have got to Level 3. (3)

Question 1(b)

This question provides the opportunity for candidates to show that they have a sound understanding of key facts around an important event in the specification. Marks were awarded for providing factual support for statements made, with two well-supported statements marked at the top end of Level Two. Consequently it is very good exam technique for candidates to ensure that examiners are aware that separate points are being made by using such terms as 'firstly', 'secondly', 'another way'.

In this question, candidates were asked to describe the key features of the New Economic Policy. Many answers gave good detail on the working of the policy. Where candidates were able to link their answer to a 'feature' (such as the relaxation of state control, the reaction to opposition, the introduction of a degree of capitalism) examiners found it an easier task to award high marks.



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Examiner Tip

The question asks about 'the key features' of the New Economic Policy' Why not go straight into the answer by using the words of the question? A very effective way to start would be 'One key feature of the New Economic Policy was ...'

Lenin needed to do something about War Communism because it caused a famine where ~~where~~ of three million people starved. He introduced the New Economic Policy. In the policy, people were allowed to have their own business of up to 25 people. Also the buying and selling of goods was allowed again. This means the peasants could grow ~~more~~ more grain because they could finally sell it. Also NEP men come in where they would travel from around the country selling and buying goods. This was Lenin's solution to War Communism.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate has provided a feature of NEP (that people were allowed to have their own business) and provided some development. However, the development is not strong. The answer was marked in Level 2 (4)

Question 1(c)

Part (c) questions test a candidate's knowledge of the effects or impact of a particular event or policy. They are not an opportunity to write about the particular event or policy in the question. So many candidates wasted their time on this question by describing the reasons for the policy of collectivisation or how it was enforced.

What examiners were looking for was not a description of collectivisation, but its effects – in other words, what it caused to happen. Almost all candidates were able to identify that the policy brought most peasants into larger farms, which were intended to be more efficient and that this policy resulted in short-term problems with food supplies, quality of equipment etc.

Level 3 answers were those that were able to explain the significance of the effects, perhaps with an 'overview' or long-term perspective. Such answers considered the long-term impact of collectivisation in terms of the contribution it was able to make to assisting industrialisation, or explained how the elimination of the kulaks made an important contribution to increasing central government control and tightening the Stalin's grip on the people.



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Examiner Tip

To avoid wasting time by providing irrelevant material, why not begin the answer with the statement '*A major effect of the policy of collectivisation was...*' It is an excellent way to make sure answers are focussed on the question

Another effect of collectivisation was dekulakisation. Stalin brainwashed the farmers that kulaks were evil and horrid. This in fact was wrong because they were getting rid of the most experience farmers and left with the unexperience farmers. In addition, one effect was that the people in the cities never knew about the famine in the country side. He brainwashed the people into thinking that nothing is wrong outside. He done this because he didn't want the people hearing what was going on and heving the people starting to riot against him.

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Examiner Comments

An effect (dekulakisation) has been identified and developed, but its impact has not been explained. The comment about the people in the cities is not an effect of collectivisation. The answer was marked in Level 2 (4)

Question 1(d)

Part (d) questions test a candidate's understanding of causation. As in part 1 (c), it does not ask for an explanation of what happened, but requires an understanding of why it happened i.e. its causes.

In this question, the requirement was to explain why Soviet industry expanded rapidly in the 1930s. There were two possible approaches to the question. Some candidates chose to explain why there was a need for expansion and argued that Soviet industry developed in response to Stalin's realisation that Russia lagged far behind the Western powers. Others dealt more with the process. Soviet industry expanded because of the introduction of the Five Year Plans, forced labour and propaganda as exemplified by the Stakhanovite movement. Both approaches were generally well-done and when candidates were able to use their knowledge to explain how particular causes could be linked to particular events, high marks were given. For example, Stalin's plans tended to revolve around heavy industry, as that would have the greatest impact in improving Russia's position. Very best answers were able to see a link between the reasons.

In the 1930s, Stalin introduced industrialisation and the five year plan to improve industry. The Gosplan, - the state planning committee - was in charge of setting targets for the five year plan. The first five year plan began in 1928 and finished early in 1932. The target was to improve the production of oil, coal, electricity and steel. The second five-year plan was to do the same and also improve agricultural method and bring in new equipment. Finally, the third year was meant to expand on luxuries such as bikes. Though it was interrupted by the second world war. People were motivated by rewards. This is a reason why Soviet industry expanded rapidly in the 1930s.

ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

In the first paragraph of this answer the candidate has done more than just describe the 5 Year Plans. An explanation of how industrialisation occurred because of Gosplan's overview and the use of rewards takes this into Level 3. The rest of the answer was less satisfactory and so 6 marks were awarded

Question 2

Question 2 is a 'process' question. It asks how a particular development or change came about. In this case candidates were asked to write on either how opposition to the Tsar grew in Russia in 1917 or how opposition was dealt with by Stalin. Most candidates chose to answer Question 2 (b) on Stalin.

Answers to Question 2(a) revealed a major problem in the examination technique of some of the candidates. Answers tended to ignore the fact that the question asked about the growth of opposition 'in 1917' and adopted the approach of explaining 'why' the Tsar was unpopular. Consequently there was much reference to the Russo-Japanese War, Bloody Sunday and Rasputin. None of these are in the specification, which starts in 1917. Examiners were able to reward marks for arguments that the poor performance in the war, poor government and food shortages made the Tsar unpopular, but the question was intended to produce descriptions of the events of 1917. Few candidates did that.

Question 2 (b) was answered much more successfully. Most candidates explained how Stalin used the purges and the Moscow Trials to control opposition. Others brought in the Cult of Stalin and the use of propaganda to show how increasing Stalin's popularity would, inevitably, reduce opposition. Level 3 was reached where candidates were able to build on the knowledge to explain why the particular measures were chosen. An explanation of the significance of the purging of the Old Bolsheviks was a good example of this.

Many people opposed the Tsar in Russia, when he took over the army and went on the battle field himself, he was blamed for Russia loosing. The Tsar had strict rules. If anybody opposed him they would be arrested or shot. World war one effected Russia greatly in 1917 there were huge food shortages which led onto the february Revolution.

One way the opposition to the Tsar grew in Russia was the february Revolution. On the 23rd february women all gathered in Petrograd to go on a bread march. They flooded the streets trying to persuade people to join them. After the next couple of days the all factories in Petrograd were closed and both ~~the~~ men and women

were protesting about Shortages of food. This was one reason how opposition to the Tsar grew in Russia in 1917.

Additionally, when the march was taking place in 8 February the Tsar sent armed forces to stop the event by opening fire on the people. Many soldiers opened fire on the people but others supported the people and did not open fire on the protesters. Instead they joined sides with the protesters, because they were just as unhappy as all the other people in Russia at this time. This was an important way which shows how opposition to the Tsar grew in Russia in 1917.

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Examiner Comments

This candidate has not written with clarity but the impact of food shortages and the opposition of the soldiers are explained. So the answer is marked at Level 3 (6)

Question 3

This question requires candidates to reach a judgement based upon a number of factors given to them in the question (However, candidates should note that they do not have to consider all the factors, nor necessarily restrict themselves to the ones given. At Level 3 at least two factors must be considered and at Level 4 at least three factors.)

On both Trotsky and the impact of Stalin's rule, almost all candidates were able to provide factual information to expand on the factors provided. Better answers also explained the significance of the factors. Sometimes explanation was superficial, but where it was developed, high marks were awarded. (For example, it is not enough to say 'War Communism was an important reason for the Bolshevik success. It was a policy which helped organise industry and control food supplies. This helped the Bolsheviks win' What was required was an explanation of why the control of industry and food supplies was significant in winning the war.

Candidates often tried to consider relative importance by asserting that one factor 'was more important because...' (and then explaining why that factor was important). What is needed to reach the highest levels is an explanation of why that factor's importance is more significant than another's. (So was the work Trotsky did with the Red Army more significant in the Bolshevik victory than the fact that the Whites were weak and disunited? Was the impact of industrialisation in the Soviet Union greater than that brought about by the purges? They had very different effects, but was one more significant than the other?)

Very best answers were those that showed the links between the factors. For example, in Question 3(a) high marks were given when candidates explained that the weaknesses of the Whites enabled the Bolsheviks to exploit the Army reforms more successfully but that without the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and War Communism, they might not have been in a position to do so. In Question 3(b) best answers usually explained how Stalin's purges and the Cult of Stalin were examples of the methods used to create an environment in which industrialisation and changes in living and working conditions could be introduced.

I agree that industrialisation was the most important effect of Stalin's rule on the Soviet Union.

Stalin introduced the industrialisation because he wanted Russia to become more modernised and developed country. By ^{20th century} ~~1917~~ Russia was still very backward country, that didn't produce any consumer goods. Therefore he introduced Five Year Plans, to catch up with the western world. The effects of industrialisation were enormous. Coal and iron production doubled. Electricity tripled. Over 100 new cities were built including massive Magnitogorsk. Also the Dniiper and Volga river dams were built. Communications were improved, as the Moscow Metro was constructed. These changes developed Russia into modernised industrialised country, and it was the most important effect of Stalin's rule on the Soviet Union.



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Examiner Comments

This first paragraph of a candidate's answer shows a clear Level 3 response. Industrialisation is developed and its impact explained. The remainder of the answer continued at this Level. It was marked at Level 3 (11)

Statistics

5HA02 2B Grade Boundaries

Grade	Max.Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Grade boundaries	50	36	33	30	27	23	19	16	13	0
UMS	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	0

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