

Mark Scheme (Results)

January 2026

Pearson Edexcel International

Advanced Level in History (WHI02/1B)

Paper 2: Breadth Study with Source Evaluation

Option 1B: China, 1900–76

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General Marking Guidance

- All candidates must receive the same treatment. Examiners must mark the first candidate in exactly the same way as they mark the last.
- Mark schemes should be applied positively. Candidates must be rewarded for what they have shown they can do rather than penalised for omissions.
- Examiners should mark according to the mark scheme not according to their perception of where the grade boundaries may lie.
- There is no ceiling on achievement. All marks on the mark scheme should be used appropriately.
- All the marks on the mark scheme are designed to be awarded. Examiners should always award full marks if deserved, i.e. if the answer matches the mark scheme. Examiners should also be prepared to award zero marks if the candidate's response is not worthy of credit according to the mark scheme.
- Where some judgement is required, mark schemes will provide the principles by which marks will be awarded and exemplification may be limited.
- When examiners are in doubt regarding the application of the mark scheme to a candidate's response, the team leader must be consulted.
- Crossed out work should be marked UNLESS the candidate has replaced it with an alternative response.

Generic Level Descriptors for Paper 2

Section A: Question 1(a)

Target: AO2 (10 marks): Analyse and evaluate appropriate source material, primary and/or contemporary to the period, within its historical context.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material
1	1–3	• Demonstrates surface level comprehension of the source material without analysis, selecting some material relevant to the question, but in the form of direct quotations or paraphrases. • Some relevant contextual knowledge is included but presented as information rather than applied to the source material. • Evaluation of the source material is assertive with little substantiation. The concept of value may be addressed, but by making stereotypical judgements.
2	4–6	• Demonstrates some understanding of the source material and attempts analysis by selecting and summarising information and making inferences relevant to the question. • Contextual knowledge is added to information from the source material, but mainly to expand or confirm matters of detail. • Evaluation of the source material is related to the specified enquiry and with some substantiation for assertions of value. The concept of value is addressed mainly by noting aspects of source provenance and some judgements may be based on questionable assumptions.
3	7–10	• Demonstrates understanding of the source material and shows some analysis by selecting key points relevant to the question, explaining their meaning and selecting material to support valid developed inferences. • Sufficient knowledge of the historical context is deployed to explain or support inferences, as well as to expand or confirm matters of detail. • Evaluation of the source material is related to the specified enquiry and based on valid criteria although justification is not fully substantiated. Explanation of value takes into account relevant considerations such as the nature or purpose of the source material or the position of the author.

Section A: Question 1(b)

Target: AO2 (15 marks): Analyse and evaluate appropriate source material, primary and/or contemporary to the period, within its historical context.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material
1	1–3	• Demonstrates surface level comprehension of the source material without analysis, selecting some material relevant to the question, but in the form of direct quotations or paraphrases. • Some relevant contextual knowledge is included, but presented as information rather than applied to the source material. • Evaluation of the source material is assertive with little supporting evidence. The concept of reliability may be addressed, but by making stereotypical judgements.
2	4–7	• Demonstrates some understanding of the source material and attempts analysis, by selecting and summarising information and making inferences relevant to the question. • Contextual knowledge is added to information from the source material but mainly to expand, confirm or challenge matters of detail. • Evaluation of the source material is related to the specified enquiry but with limited support for judgement. The concept of reliability is addressed mainly by noting aspects of source provenance and some judgements may be based on questionable assumptions.
3	8–11	• Demonstrates understanding of the source material and shows some analysis by selecting key points relevant to the question, explaining their meaning and selecting material to support valid developed inferences. • Detailed knowledge of the historical context is deployed to explain or support inferences as well as to expand, confirm or challenge matters of detail. • Evaluation of the source material is related to the specified enquiry and explanation of weight takes into account relevant considerations such as nature or purpose of the source material or the position of the author. Judgements are based on valid criteria, with some justification.
4	12–15	• Analyses the source material, interrogating the evidence to make reasoned inferences and to show a range of ways the material can be used, for example by distinguishing between information and claim or opinion. • Deploys well-selected knowledge of the historical context, but mainly to illuminate or discuss the limitations of what can be gained from the content of the source material. Displays some understanding of the need to interpret source material in the context of the values and concerns of the society from which it is drawn. • Evaluation of the source material uses valid criteria which are justified and applied, although some of the evaluation may not be fully substantiated. Evaluation takes into account the weight the evidence will bear as part of coming to a judgement.

Section B

Target: AO1 (25 marks): Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material
1	1–6	• Simple or generalised statements are made about the topic. • Some accurate and relevant knowledge is included, but it lacks range and depth and does not directly address the question. • The overall judgement is missing or asserted. • There is little, if any, evidence of attempts to structure the answer, and the answer overall lacks coherence and precision.
2	7–12	• There is some analysis of some key features of the period relevant to the question, but descriptive passages are included that are not clearly shown to relate to the focus of the question. • Mostly accurate and relevant knowledge is included, but lacks range or depth and has only implicit links to the demands and conceptual focus of the question. • An overall judgement is given but with limited support and the criteria for judgement are left implicit. • The answer shows some attempts at organisation, but most of the answer is lacking in coherence, clarity and precision.
3	13–18	• There is some analysis of, and attempt to explain links between, the relevant key features of the period and the question, although some mainly descriptive passages may be included. • Mostly accurate and relevant knowledge is included to demonstrate some understanding of the demands and conceptual focus of the question, but material lacks range or depth. • Attempts are made to establish criteria for judgement and to relate the overall judgement to them, although with weak substantiation. • The answer shows some organisation. The general trend of the argument is clear, but parts of it lack logic, coherence or precision.
4	19–25	• Key issues relevant to the question are explored by an analysis of the relationships between key features of the period. • Sufficient knowledge is deployed to demonstrate understanding of the demands and conceptual focus of the question and to meet most of its demands. • Valid criteria by which the question can be judged are established and applied in the process of coming to a judgement. Although some of the evaluations may be only partly substantiated, the overall judgement is supported. • The answer is generally well organised. The argument is logical and is communicated with clarity, although in a few places it may lack coherence or precision.

Section A: indicative content

Option 1B: China, 1900-76

Question	Indicative content
1a	Answers will be credited according to their deployment of material in relation to the qualities outlined in the generic mark scheme. The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all the material which is indicated as relevant. Other relevant material not suggested below must also be credited. Candidates are required to analyse the source and consider its value for an enquiry into the development of communications in China in the years 1900-27. 1. The value could be identified in terms of the following points of information from the source, and the inferences which could be drawn and supported from the source: • It implies that China was being cheated by the Great Powers over the terms of railway investment ('railways are immensely profitable...terms ... so disadvantageous... serious financial difficulties have resulted.') • It suggests that the development of communications was stymied by Great Power rivalry ('If the Great Powers had worked together... the mileage in China would be twice what it is today.') • It claims that the development of communications was controlled by foreign powers ('commercial competition between the Great Powers... seen in the Chinese railways.', 'telegraphy stations... controlled by foreigners?') • It claims that China was being unfairly forced to pay for telegraphy stations that it does not control ('Is it fair... imposed the heavy cost on China... in reality, controlled by foreigners?'). 2. The following points could be made about the authorship, nature or purpose of the source and applied to ascribe value to information and inferences: • The reporter was based in Peking and was therefore in a position to comment on what he had observed in China in the development of communications • The tone of the report is critical of the Powers' actions in the development of communications in China. As a writer for a British newspaper, this gives the report a candid air • The date of the report has enabled the reporter to take a long view over developments in communications since 1900. 3. Knowledge of the historical context should be deployed to support and develop inferences and to confirm the accuracy/usefulness of information. Relevant points may include: • After the Boxer Rebellion, the Qing granted concessions to foreign powers to build railways. It was unable to prevent foreign control as it has taken loans from foreign powers that it could not repay • Foreign powers exploited China's lack of finances by granting loans, knowing that they could not be repaid and that it would give them control over communications that would be lucrative for foreign trade • In the 1920s, the USA played a key role in developing telegraphy in China. The Federal Telegraph Company of California built stations across China, connecting Shanghai, Harbin and Guangzhou to the trans-Pacific link • Telegraphy had a significant impact on many Chinese people. They were connected to new ideas and information from overseas. Other relevant material must be credited.

Question	Indicative content
1b	Answers will be credited according to their deployment of material in relation to the qualities outlined in the generic mark scheme. The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all the material which is indicated as relevant. Other relevant material not suggested below must also be credited. Candidates are required to analyse and evaluate the source in relation to an enquiry into the purposes of the Cultural Revolution in China. 1. The following points could be made about the origin and nature of the source and applied when giving weight to selected information and inferences: - Nie was a female academic at Beijing University and was in a good position to voice her own perception about the attitude of the university to the Cultural Revolution - Nie was a supporter of the Cultural Revolution, later becoming a Red Guard, and her views represent those members of society and the Party who were enthusiastic supporters of Mao - Nie's big character poster was propagandistic in nature and was later broadcast to the wider public by the CCP media. Its purpose was to encourage university members to embrace the Cultural Revolution - The content and tone of the big character poster made it clear that Nie was critical of 'revisionists' within the university and fully indoctrinated in Mao Zedong Thought. 2. The evidence could be assessed in terms of giving weight to the following points of information and inferences: - It claims that a purpose of the Cultural Revolution was to remove enemies to Mao ('to smash the attacks of the reactionary sinister gang in defence of the Central Committee and Chairman Mao.') - It implies that there were enemies within the university that needed removing ('revolutionary desire... suppressed.', 'Something suspicious is going on!', 'aren't you suppressing the revolution?') - It indicates that a purpose was to enforce Mao's brand of communism in China ('unite, holding high the great red banner of Mao Zedong Thought.', 'Carry the socialist revolution through to the end.'). 3. Knowledge of historical context should be deployed to support and develop inferences and to confirm the accuracy/usefulness of information or to note limitations or to challenge aspects of the content. Relevant points may include: - Mao was opposed to the revisionist measures that had been adopted in the aftermath of the failure of the Great Leap Forward. The Cultural Revolution was to revive the Maoist revolution and remove Liu and Deng - The Cultural Revolution would provide an opportunity to remove 'self-satisfied' bureaucrats in the Party who Mao believed were growing into a new class of Mandarins - The Cultural Revolution would provide a test for young people who had not participated in the years of struggle. It would help them to identify with the revolution - Mao believed in permanent revolution. He launched the Cultural Revolution to ensure that China did not waver in its revolutionary attitude as he believed the Soviet Union had done. Other relevant material must be credited.

Section B: Indicative content

Option 1B: China, 1900–76

Question	Indicative content
2	Answers will be credited according to their deployment of material in relation to the qualities outlined in the generic mark scheme. The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all the material which is indicated as relevant. Candidates are expected to reach a judgement about whether the status of women in China improved in the years 1900–49. The arguments and evidence that the status of women in China improved in the years 1900–49 should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include: • Women's status improved with the growing resistance to foot binding, e.g. the May the Fourth Movement opposed it as a symbol of China's backwardness. Some women unbound their feet to symbolise freedom • The New Culture Movement, which began in 1915, promoted free-choice marriage. This was later codified in GMD laws. The GMD promoted a reform campaign against underage marriages • The provision of female education improved the status of women. In the years 1900–49, 25 per cent of girls were educated in missionary schools, which opened up new opportunities for them outside the home • Women's status was improved by the 1931 Family and Inheritance Law that gave women equal rights to divorce and to be head of the family. It outlawed bigamy and allowed people to choose their own spouses • The status of women was improved in CCP areas in the 1930s and 1940s. Women's associations were established, concubines were freed, brothels closed and women freed from the obligations of arranged marriages. The arguments and evidence that the status of women in China did not improve in the years 1900–49 should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include: • Women had inferior status to men throughout the period. They were regarded as the property firstly of their fathers and then of their husbands; they had few legal rights and could not own property • Girls continued to be subject to arranged marriages sealed by the payment of a bride price. This was near universal in rural areas and, before 1945, 95 per cent of marriages in China were arranged marriages • Foot binding lingered on in some regions in China, e.g. a 1928 census in rural Shanxi found that 18% of women had bound feet, while in remote rural areas like Yunnan Province, foot binding continued until the 1950s • Women's work continued to be centred on the home, preparing food, cleaning and looking after children. Although most women also performed some manual labour, well-paid employment opportunities were limited. Other relevant material must be credited.

Question	Indicative content
3	Answers will be credited according to their deployment of material in relation to the qualities outlined in the generic mark scheme. The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all the material which is indicated as relevant. Candidates are expected to reach a judgement about whether the leadership of Mao Zedong was the main reason for the survival of the Communists in the years 1927-49. The arguments and evidence that the leadership of Mao Zedong was the main reason for the survival of the Communists in the years 1927-49 should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include: • Mao took the decision to ignore Comintern orders to continue with the United Front at any cost. After the failed Autumn Harvest Rising in 1927, he led his followers to refuge in the mountains in the Jiangxi province • Mao took over leadership of the CCP during the Long March, determined the route and tactics that prevented GMD destroying them, and led the Communists, albeit only 10,000 out of 80,000, to the new base at Yan'an • Mao's directions over treatment of peasants won the CCP many followers in the years 1936-49. During the civil war, peasants sided with the Communists against the GMD, which helped to facilitate the 1949 victory • Mao directed the Red Army to fight the Japanese, and it played a key role in the defeat of Japan. Mao later claimed that the Communists had saved China whereas Chiang had been reluctant to respond to the invasion • Mao showed skilled military leadership during the civil war. He allowed his generals to provide the strategy, ensured discipline in the Red Army, and masterminded the propaganda strategy that won wide support. The arguments and evidence that the leadership of Mao Zedong was not the main reason/ there were other, more important reasons for the survival of the Communists in the years 1927-49 should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include: • Chiang made crucial military mistakes in the 1930s. He failed to encircle the Communists in the 1930-34 extermination campaign and failed to defeat them in the Long March • Chiang's mismanagement of China's economy, his failure to respond to the Japanese invasion of Manchuria and the growth of corruption in areas under GMD rule, meant that he had very limited support by 1949 • The outbreak of full-scale war with Japan in 1937 meant that the GMD was obliged to work with the Communists to defeat Japan, which enabled the Communists to strengthen and survive • Chiang's failed military strategy in the civil war, his mistreatment of NRA recruits, many of whom defected to the Red Army, and the loss of US support enabled the Communists to survive and achieve victory. Other relevant material must be credited.

Question	Indicative content
4	Answers will be credited according to their deployment of material in relation to the qualities outlined in the generic mark scheme. The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all the material which is indicated as relevant. Candidates are expected to reach a judgement about whether, in the years 1950–76, Mao’s economic policies achieved many positive results. The arguments and evidence that, in the years 1950–76, Mao’s economic policies achieved many positive results should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include: • Mao regarded both his agricultural policies and industrial policies as achieving positive results in fulfilling his desire to establish a communist system with a command economy and no private ownership • The first Five-Year Plan and the early agricultural policy had some positive outcomes, e.g. by 1952, 40% of peasants had joined MATs; in the first Five-Year Plan, coal production doubled, electric production trebled • The mass projects of the Five-Year Plans resulted in some massive feats of construction, giant bridges, canal and dams and, to Mao, demonstrated the greatness of Chinese communism • Mao’s economic policies, with the focus on modern technological development enabled China to become a nuclear power. It tested its own nuclear bomb in 1964 and its own H-bomb in 1967. The arguments and evidence that, in the years 1950–76, Mao’s economic policies did not achieve many positive results should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include: • The outcome of the Great Leap Forward was not positive; steel produced in backyard furnaces was worthless and industrial production declined as the loss of the profit motive removed the incentive to work hard • The use of Party cadres to run businesses led to negative results. They lacked business skills and production fell, e.g. steel production fell from 15 million tonnes to 1 million tonnes in the years 1966–70 • The Great Leap Forward Plan led to famine in China. The backyard furnace campaign destroyed farming equipment and the sparrowcide, combined with Lysenkoism and peasant resistance, caused a collapse of production • Mao’s decision to force Tibet to produce maize and wheat, in spite of the unsuitability of the land and climate, and restrictions on grazing yak, led to the emaciation of the animals and famine in Tibet • The impact of the Cultural Revolution on China’s economy was negative. Coal, oil and steel production all declined dramatically. Other relevant material must be credited.