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## Paper 2 – Outline study

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### Section A Question 4

#### 4 The Russian Revolution, 1905–1917

- (a) Why did the Tsar abdicate in 1917? [10]
- (b) To what extent were the reforms of Witte and Stolypin successful? [20]

#### Mark scheme

#### 4 The Russian Revolution, 1905–1917

- (a) Why did the Tsar abdicate in 1917? [10]

The key issue is the factors which led up to the abdication and their relative importance. There were the many personal failings, and he was faced with insurmountable problems. He was faced with an ultimatum by the generals and had little choice. He had clearly failed and he knew it. The army's loyalty had dissipated; there was obvious military failure. He felt that his brother would replace him and keep the regime going, while he could retire to be the country gentleman he should have been. The alternative was anarchy and he realised that he had no other option. The growth of radical opposition and economic breakdown were also factors, but the extent to which they impinged on the Tsar's thinking is arguable.

- (b) To what extent were the reforms of Witte and Stolypin successful? [20]

The key issue is the extent to which the work of the two men benefitted Russia. Reflection on what 'success' might imply is looked for, as their work had varying impacts on different groups in society as was, as for the nation as a whole. Witte, of course, was the great 'railway' man and also a key factor behind administrative changes such as the Council of Ministers and the Fundamental Laws. He must take responsibility for the Dumas and the early stages of the concessions post-1905.

Stolypin, of course, was very different with very clear views and remarkable honesty. However, his ruthlessness, 'neckties' and Field Court Martials made the regime few friends and many enemies. His interference with elections angered many and his ability to alienate minorities was damaging. However, he did talk to the peasants and really aimed to create a prosperous peasantry and clear up the mess left by the abolition of serfdom. He did increase social tension, yet both agricultural and industrial output went up and he did appear to have some solutions to some of Russia's major problems.

## Example candidate response – high

Question  
number

4a.	<p>Tsar Nicholas II abdicated in March 1917, following the February-March revolution in Russia while he was away on the war front. His abdication marks the end of the centuries of rule of Russia by Tsarism, and the Romanov Dynasty.</p>
	<p>The Tsar was forced to abdicate due to the March revolution that undermined his authority, <sup>and paralysed the country</sup> for decades people had begun to have enough of the harsh autocracy of Tsarist rule and the problems that were piled on Russia as a result of her involvement in World War I only deepened this. The country was ill prepared for the size and scale of the war that was occurring. The army was inefficiently supplied, some soldiers didn't even have rifles, and throughout Russia news spread of embarrassing defeats at the hands of the Germans, as inflation skyrocketed. The cities were <del>becoming</del> becoming increasingly crowded as civilians <del> fled</del> <sup> fled</sup> the fighting zones and settled there. The swollen urban population began to face food shortages and lengthy queues for basic necessities like bread. In late February of 1917, there <sup> was</sup> a strike, bread buying, <sup> and then</sup> led to workers <del> rising</del> <sup> rising</sup> metal workers and female textile workers rose up and <del> fought</del> <sup> rioted in Petrograd</sup>. The Tsar, seeing the only way he knew how ordered troops to crush the revolution. However, the soldiers, bitter at defeats on the war and the bad treatment by their officers, <del> rebelled</del> <sup> rebelled</sup> and joined the revolution.</p>
	<p>Very soon the Tsar had lost all authority. His troops that were loyal to him had caught the revolutionary sentiment, and with their support, the revolution steamed forward. The royal family had also begun to lose friends as courtiers as early as 1914 due to the actions of Rasputin which alienated many of the nobles, who the royal family were dependents on <sup> for</sup> their support.</p>
	<p>In conclusion, by March 1917, the Tsar had lost the support of the civilians who were angered at the situation facing them during the war, the soldiers who supported him, and had</p>



## Example candidate response – high, continued

few funds left at court. On his way back to Moscow his train was held up by the revolutionary revolutionaries. It was a real position for the Tsar who on his final days of rule would not even command his train <sup>to move</sup>. His generals urged for his abdication and he obliged, ending Tsarist rule in Russia in March 1917.

b) Sergei Witte and Peter Stolypin are both very influential figures in Russian history, responsible for reforms that were designed to modernise and improve Russia. However, they were not fully successful.

In the late 1890s, it became clear that Russia needed to industrialise and modernise to keep up with the Great Powers of Europe. The emergence of the new powerful empire of Germany and ~~the~~ economic domination by Great Britain and the other Western powers served to undermine Russia's Great Power status. The lead for Russia's industrialisation was taken by Sergei Witte.

Witte realised that Russia did not have the capital to invest in the vast industrial ~~public~~ movements that had taken place in Britain and Germany. He therefore decided that a stable Russian currency would attract foreign investment that would provide the funds for industrialisation. Investments as a result came from Britain, France, and other industrialised powers. Russia as a result underwent massive economic and industrial growth. From ~~then~~ Up to 1903 when he was removed from office, Witte turned the mostly backward Russian economy in to ~~the~~ one of the world's top industrial powers. Before Witte industry was virtually unheard of, but his tenure saw a massive amount of industrial output, especially in the textile and agricultural sector.

However, we must not over estimate Witte's reforms. While industrial growth did go on apace, ~~per~~ per capita levels

## Example candidate response – high, continued

remained low, approximately half of what was the average in Western Europe. Secondly, although Russia did increase industrial output, the major increases came from the agricultural and textile industries, not the steel and coal industries, which were dwarfed by her western rivals. Furthermore, in contrast with a smaller rural population, the hardships of modernisation would mostly fall on the peasants. The government raised taxes to fund industrial production which hit the peasants hard, and they were forced to sell more and more grain for exports, and as a result many often went hungry. Industrialisation also hit the working class very badly. They were forced to work for long hours, often for very low pay, in unhealthy and dangerous working and living conditions. Strikes to organise for higher pay were treated as illegal protests and were met with savage repression by the Tsar's government.

Tsar Nicholas wanted Witte to promote economic and industrial growth, but he was not willing to allow social or political change. The growth of industrialisation caused severe social unrest with the peasants and working classes. Witte was blamed for these ~~causes~~ ~~causes~~ and removed from office in 1903.

The other prime minister Peter Stolypin faced no difficult ~~tasks~~ to the end of his tenure in 1911. Stolypin had aims to reform agriculture. His policy was a "wages on the strong."

Stolypin's aims had with it the reduction on the power of the village commune which regulated peasants life and farming. Stolypin had the aim of reducing their role, allowing for the holding of private property, increasing resources of the peasants land banks, and instituting mass relocation programs to the areas of Siberia and the far East.

Stolypin was somewhat successful. His policies created a new, enterprising, industrialised and wealthy peasant class; the kulacks. This paved the way for greater use of machinery in farming,



## Example candidate response – high, continued

improved animal husbandry, and a general improvement in the state of agriculture in Russia, shown by increased yields during the period. This new upper ~~peasantry~~<sup>peasantry</sup> class greatly benefited under Stolypin's rule.

However, a bitter divide came between the kulaks and the poor peasants. Many found it difficult and expensive to go into the new agriculture that required machines that the kulaks had done. A class struggle ~~erupted~~ erupted between the successful modernised ~~kulaks~~ kulaks and the slow, sluggish and impoverished peasants that remained on the village communes; many of whom responded to this with violence against their richer counterparts. This social unrest grew and they greatly undermined the success of Stolypin's reforms. Stolypin could never really gain support from the Tsar, and he was successfully assassinated in 1911, bearing the blame for the grievances of the lower class of the peasantry.

In conclusion, both Witte and Stolypin initiated partly successful plans of modernisation and industrialisation. But they were in turn blamed for the growing social unrest that followed that caused Witte to be removed from office in 1903, and Stolypin in 1911. Witte's leadership however was seen as vital as he was called back in 1905 by the Tsar to diffuse the revolution that was occurring in that year.

## Examiner comment – high

### Part a

Credit has been awarded for the fact that the candidate displays detailed understanding of the situation which confronted the Tsar in 1917. The candidate selects appropriate evidence to demonstrate how the impact of the First World War inflamed ongoing discontent with Tsarist rule. It is argued that, in response, the 'Tsar, acting the only way he knew how, ordered troops to crush the revolution'. The candidate might have included more analysis of the fact that the troops failed to obey this instruction by arguing, for example, that failure to maintain control over the armed forces was the most crucial factor in the Tsar's loss of power.

The response is fully-focused on the requirements of the question and demonstrates impressive understanding of a wide range of relevant causal factors. In order to achieve higher marks, a little more analytical depth was required at times.

**Mark awarded for part a = 8 out of 10**

### Part b

The candidate displays detailed understanding of the question's requirements, and has developed a fully-focused and balanced argument. The response begins by establishing criteria by which to evaluate how successful the reforms of Witte and Stolypin actually were. It is then argued that, as a result of Witte's reforms and backed by foreign investment, Russia 'underwent massive economic and industrial growth'. This apparent success is then counterbalanced by the fact that Russian output was 'still dwarfed by her Western rivals'.

In places, greater factual depth was required to substantiate the points being made. For example, evidence was needed to support the argument that industrial and agricultural output grew as a direct result of the policies of Witte and Stolypin respectively. The response would also have benefited from a stronger conclusion. The final sentence reads almost as an afterthought and does not provide a focused ending to an otherwise sustained argument. In general, however, this is a good response, based on impressive understanding of both the topic and the question in particular.

**Mark awarded for part b = 16 out of 20**

**Total marks awarded = 24 out of 30**

## Example candidate response – middle

Question	Part	
4	a	<p>The Tsar abdicated in 1917 because of the war. The war (WW1) was going badly and so many lives lost in battle that he abdicated because people blamed him, because he was inexperienced in war strategy. He abdicated because he lost the support of the Duma, and the army. In the 1905 revolution it failed because the army supported him and they were loyal, but now they disobeyed his orders.</p> <p>He also abdicated because of his wife, who he left in charge of Russia and went to war. The Tsar was incapable of being a ruler, and the scandalous rumours of Tsarina and Rasputin, made the people to be more discontent of the Tsarist rule.</p> <p>He also abdicated because of his sick son (that's the excuse he gave) and need more time to spend with him. As his son was sick, and the Tsar was a "family man" he used that as an excuse to abdicate and spend time with him.</p> <p>But the main reason was he had lost the support of his army because of World War I, and his people, the Duma. He knew if he tries to be authoritarian it going to lead to another revolution.</p>



## Example candidate response – middle, continued

4	b	<p>To some extent, Witte and Stolypin reforms was successful because; Witte was able to build a railway that was 700,000 km long, so that Russia can be industrialised and make his own export of iron and steel, which means they don't have to ask for help from other countries.</p> <p>It was also successful because it provides job for the peasant and other workers who were jobless. Witte reforms created hope for the Russians, and transportation to be easier when exporting these goods.</p> <p>With Stolypin, his reforms was successful because it took the peasant under the rule of their leaders, he encourage the peasants to plant more crops so agricultural goods can increase which can bring more income in Russia.</p> <p>It was successful because he opens the peasant bank where they can take loan to sustain their farms. and the agricultural produce raised from 20% to 65 tons.</p> <p>Both Witte and Stolypin reforms were successful because it stabilise the workers and peasant of Russia at that time, and it made them</p>
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## Example candidate response – middle, continued

to have more faith in the tsar and not to indulge in revolution. But both of their reforms were short lived.

On the other hand, their reforms was not successful because; for Witte, getting loans means that they have to pay with interest and since Russia was economically unstable it became impossible. Also it was not successful because they increase taxation and squeeze of all the money the peasants had, which led to strikes and demonstrations from both the peasant and workers.

After the railway stopped, workers went on strike and people did not buy the products because they spent all their money on taxes and Russia had huge debts to pay to other countries, making it unstable.

Also Stolypin reforms were not successful because although he tries to please the peasant, he left prominent members of Russia angry through his carrot and stick plan. By the end of his reforms, 600 trade unions were banned which was a bad thing because workers don't have anything to come back

## Example candidate response – middle, continued

to if things goes south. which it did, and it led to number of protesting.

by the end of Stolypin reforms, 1200 oppositions were killed which created a rising discontent among the people, which we can say that his reforms were not successful.

Both Witte and Stolypin's reforms to some extent was not successful because Russia was still economically crippled, and there were lots of social problems like taxation, starvation that did not change and were still the same.

However, it was successful because they both tries to help Russia to industrialised (Witte) and attack major group that can cause revolution (Stolypin) by helping the peasant. Although both of their reforms was short lived, they created a stage in Russia that other leaders follow.



## Examiner comment – middle

### Part a

The candidate has identified a number of relevant factors to explain why the Tsar abdicated in 1917. That 'people blamed him' for the fact that 'the war was going badly' is perceived as the most crucial factor. Credit has been awarded for the statement that the Tsar survived the 1905 Revolution 'because the army supported him and were loyal, but now they disobeyed his orders'. This analysis is based on sound understanding of how the threat facing the Tsar was far greater in 1917 than it had been previously.

The response is, however, lacking in range and depth. For example, the candidate argues that the Tsar abdicated 'because he lost the support of the Duma and the army'. It was necessary to explain why he had lost this support and to provide factual evidence to back it up. Similarly, more detail was needed to explain the increasing discontent of the Russian people and the growth of radical opposition to Tsarist rule. In particular, the response needed to demonstrate greater understanding of the context in which the Tsar made his decision to abdicate, following a revolution and an ultimatum from his generals.

In general, therefore, the response shows some understanding of the requirements of the question, but lacks the range and depth required to achieve higher marks.

**Mark awarded for part a = 5 out of 10**

### Part b

The candidate shows good understanding of the question's requirements, and makes a genuine attempt to develop a fully-focused argument, supported by some relevant evidence.

Although the aims of Witte and Stolypin are not explicitly outlined, it is clear that the candidate has some understanding of them. The response does, however, suffer from a lack of factual depth. For example, detail provided of the reforms themselves is very limited. It is simply asserted, without factual support, that Witte built a railway and created a situation whereby 'Russia can be industrialised' and 'export its own iron and steel'. Similarly, the statement that Stolypin 'encouraged the peasants to plant more crops so agricultural goods can increase' is too vague.

The response also lacks a sense of balance. Greater analytical depth is provided in support of the view that the reforms were unsuccessful than in support of the opposing view. At times, the candidate relies on vague and unsubstantiated assertions, such as that Stolypin was successful because 'he opens the peasant bank where they can take loans to sustain their farms'. This approach is particularly evident in the concluding statement that Witte and Stolypin succeeded because 'they both tried to help Russia'.

In general, the response contains relevant material, but it lacks factual and analytical depth.

**Mark awarded for part b = 12 out of 20**

**Total marks awarded = 17 out of 30**

## Example candidate response – low

Question	Part	
4	a	<p>There are many reasons as to why the tsar abdicated in 1917. A few of these reasons include the fact that Rasputin and the tsarina made him unpopular, he went to front as Commander in Chief in September 1915, he did nothing in favour of the <del>poor</del> workers after the 1905 revolution and he lost respect of <del>the</del> the generals.</p> <p><del>When</del> A crucial reason as to why the tsar abdicated was because he went to the front during World War 1, as commander in chief in September 1915. This meant that he was held personally responsible for the losses at war. This upset the middle class since the war hindered the economy and at the same time he lost yet another war, such as the Russo-Japanese War 1905, which made him greatly unpopular. None the less, the people he left in charge of internal politics of Russia was even more devastating to the people.</p> <p>The tsar left the tsarina and Rasputin in charge of Russia's internal politics. This greatly hindered his status since the tsar had a duma which consisted of rich middle class thirsty for political power. Instead the tsar sent the duma home and gave power to Rasputin and the tsarina. Rasputin</p>



## Example candidate response – low, continued

created a bad image for the tsar and therefore this greatly made him unpopular in the eyes of the people. On the other hand, before this, the tsar also introduced the fundamental laws which also greatly limited the duma's power since the tsar was able to VETO their decision.

This means that the growing unpopularity of the tsar added up over time.

Since the 1905 revolution, the tsar did nothing to alter the lives of the workers for the better. During the time of war, the demand for arms only increased and the conditions of the workers only got worse. The October Manifesto also created the duma therefore at the time, there was an alternative government, which was the duma, therefore more people were willing to overthrow the tsar.

Overall, I believe that the most crucial factor as to why the tsar abdicated was the growing unpopularity due to Rasputin, loss in 1905 Russo-Japanese war etc. And due to the lack of reform made in regards to the workers since their petition on 22 January 1905, asking for 1 rouble minimum wage and 8 hour working day. Also Russification alienated over 60% of the population.

## Example candidate response – low, continued

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(b)

The reforms of Witte and Stolypin were successful to a certain extent. ~~There~~ They were unsuccessful ~~since~~ due to the tsar's reluctance to reform, the middle class wanting to solidify their power by not allowing reforms, the general differences of ~~a~~ the population that made it hard to reform, the influence of foreign industries. On the other hand, several reforms were successful since Stolypin was able to help the peasants by introducing laws, Witte increased industrial production greatly.

On the whole, the Tsar and the middle class were very reluctant to reform. Since the Tsar's decisions were easily manipulated and nepotism was greatly common in the Russian government, reform was not a popular idea. ~~The~~ Russia was an autocracy therefore Stolypin's attempts to educate the peasant based 82% of the population was very difficult. The middle class preferred cheap labour therefore they were against educational reforms. ~~At~~ Even more importantly, only 40% of the population ~~was~~ were native Russians therefore the religious



## Example candidate response – low, continued

and language differences made educational reform barely possible.

Russia mainly relied on foreign capital and industry. A lot of foreign industries, such as French factories, were situated in Russia due to the cheap labour. Since they were not Russian industries, the tsar ~~had~~ had no power over the cost of labour and therefore it was very hard to introduce reforms.

On the other hand, Witte and Stolypin managed to industrialise Russia. Witte encouraged industrialisation and urbanisation in Petrograd and Moscow and ~~he~~ he encouraged industries to open. This resulted in great increases of coal and oil productions. At the same time, Stolypin introduced laws to help the peasantry, such as the 9 November 1906 law. These helped the peasants gain freedom from the control of the mir and buy their own land. ~~He~~ He also pushed land banks to give out loans to the peasants to initiate a more efficient agriculture.

Overall, I believe that the reforms of Stolypin and Witte were ~~more~~ successful to a lesser extent. At the time, Russia did not have a proper banking system and this

Example candidate response – low, continued

therefore hindered industrialisation, the tsar vetoed a lot of reforms due to the middle class' influence over him and also the fact that Russian people were so diverse also played a great role. Only 60% spoke Russian and therefore educational reforms were hard to achieve.



**Examiner comment – low****Part a**

Credit has been awarded for the fact that the candidate begins by identifying some relevant factors to explain why the Tsar abdicated in 1917. After this fully-focused opening, however, the response drifts into consideration of longer-term factors whose relevance to the immediate situation in 1917 is not sufficiently explicit. Defeat in the war against Japan in 1905, the impact of the 1905 Revolution, the Tsar's failure to keep the promises made in the October Manifesto, and his introduction of the Fundamental Laws are used to support the rather vague assertions that 'the growing unpopularity of the Tsar added up over time' and, therefore, 'more people were willing to overthrow' him. To give these points more relevance to the context of 1917, it was necessary to show how the Tsar had survived these earlier threats because he maintained the support of key groups, such as the army. Evidence was required to demonstrate how and why, by 1917, he could no longer rely on this support.

While making some valid points, the response does not fully address the specific requirements of the question.

**Mark awarded for part a = 4 out of 10**

**Part b**

Credit has been awarded for the fact that the candidate shows some understanding of the requirements of the question and, in particular, highlights the restrictions imposed on both Witte and Stolypin in their attempts to modernise Russia. The Tsar's 'reluctancy to reform' and the determination of the influential classes to 'solidify their power' by resisting change, for example, are seen as key factors which limited the impact of the ministers' policies. This leads to the conclusion that, overall, the reforms of Witte and Stolypin were unsuccessful. The evidence used to support this conclusion is, however, lacking in range and depth. There is, for example, no attempt to explain what Witte and Stolypin were hoping to achieve through their reforms; establishing their aims would have provided 'success criteria' by which to evaluate the extent to which those aims were achieved. Similarly, detail regarding the reforms themselves is both vague and generalised. In order to address the question effectively, it was necessary to analyse the impact of these attempted reforms. For example, the statement that 'Russia mainly relied on foreign capital' could have been expanded to demonstrate how this significantly limited Witte's industrial reforms.

In general, therefore, the response tends to focus on the reasons why the reforms of Witte and Stolypin were resisted by the Tsar and those with influence over him, rather than on the key issue of the impact of those reforms on Russia. While the essay contains some implicitly relevant argument, supporting factual evidence is limited.

**Mark awarded for part b = 8 out of 20**

**Total marks awarded = 12 out of 30**