**Additional essay questions and support for answering them**

How accurate is it to describe the years 1949-65 as a period of great social change in the lives of the Chinese people?

**Tip: Do not generalise change** as a single entity treating all change in China as the same and ignore outlying areas. Show awareness that the rate of change varied during the years covered by the question, and for specific groups within Chinese society.

**Great social change can be positive or negative**

Possible paragraph focuses could look at the following social changes:

* Impact of reforms in changing lives of women – was there great social change in this area or was it limited?
* Impact of educational in changing lives of people - was there great social change in this area or was it limited?
* Impact of healthcare reform in changing lives of people - was there great social change in this area or was it limited?
* Impact of agricultural changes in changing lives of people - was there great social change in this area or was it limited? -
* Impact of Industrial changes in changing lives of people - was there great social change in this area or was it limited?

Content you could include

* Mao had long defended the rights of women, and laws were passed in the 1950s giving women more rights The Marriage Law of 1950 banned arranged marriages, allowed freer divorce, and gave women the right to own property. But there followed an explosion in divorce rates and the policies towards women were met with stiff resistance. Also property rights in the countryside proved meaningless with the introduction of collectivisation and the communes.
* The policies emancipating women did not change entrenched positions overnight, and this is so especially in the countryside.
* Very few women became involved in the economic or political life of the country.
* A national system of primary education reduced illiteracy, literacy rates increased from 20% in 1949 to 70% in 1976 and more students were able to attend secondary school and universities. However only 35% of children received any education after the age of 12
* There was a significant improvement in the provision of medical facilities thanks to the growing number of trained doctors and nurses. But Traditional customs had an impact on the success.

**Words to use to judge the level of social change –**

**great / profound / superficial / limited / long term / short term / widespread / narrow.**

**To what extent were Mao’s social policies successful between 1950 and 1976?**

Possible paragraphs

1. Could refer to policies designed to improve the lot of women e.g. the Marriage Law of 1950, attempts to promote gender equality, the rights of women to own property and the political rights of women.

2. Could write about the campaign for educational provision

3. Medical and Health provision

4. Could also refer to religious policies

**How far did the position of women in China changein the years 1950-76?**

**Tip: Do not generalise change**.

Show awareness that the rate of change varied during the years covered by the question, and for specific groups of women within Chinese society. Also change varied according to the area where women lived.

Possible paragraphs:

Marriage laws

Changing work opportunities in Countryside (and ownership etc.) and towns

Political opportunities

Education

Health?

**Explain the amount of change and continuity in each area.**

Useful summary info from Hodder

‘Mao gave young Chinese particularly women, a sense of personal identity and emancipation and equality. Their involvement in politics improved their self-esteem. From the perspective of women themselves the Chinese revolution represented an unequalled opportunity if not one always realised to achieve a level of economic security and social equity that was simply inconceivable under previous regimes’*.*

*Page 294 Communist states in the twentieth century Hodder Education*