How accurate is it to say that Mao’s **economic policies** met their **aims**?

Please note there are many ways to answer this question. The plan below is one way you could answer it.

An alternative way would be to break down the economic policies in industry and agriculture by sector. E.g. Heavy industry; Energy production; grain production etc (See the model essay on 1st FYP on Weebly for an example of this)

**Essay Plan:**

Overall aim of economic policies: To modernise China’s economy to enable China to catch up with the West

**Possible line of argument:**

(Possible to argue that Mao’s economic policies did meet most of their aims in the years before GLF. However from the GLF onwards most of the policies did not meet their aims)

Whilst Mao’s economic policies met some of their ideological aims notably the ending of private ownership and the total control of the rural and urban workforce. In economic terms, despite some initial successes in boosting China’s industrial and agricultural production the policies ultimately failed to meet their aims and had disastrous consequences for the Chinese people during the GLF. Many of the Mao’s economic policies were later abandoned/ reversed during a period of pragmatic economic reform following the failure of the GLF.

**Possible paragraph headings on economic policies meeting their aims:**

**1. Early economic polices (pre glf) successful in raising Industrial and Agricultural output.**

E.G. examine data of first five plan for some evidence of successes in increasing Heavy industry (iron and steel production etc. There is also some evidence of increases in grain and meat production in the initial stages of collectivisation.

Obvious however point – would be point out likelihood of results being exaggerated to please cadres. Also China did not have the skills required for turning what had been produced into manufactured goods because of a lack of technical skills and expertise. Also China heavily dependent on expensive Soviet advisers.

**2. Economic policies met their ideological aim of ending of private ownership of land and industry (and extending communism)**

E.G. Destruction of landlordism and early land reform + by end of 58, the CCP claimed that 99% of the peasant population had been moved into communes as a result of collectivisation. This represented almost ½ a billion people. Private ownership of land was outlawed. The selling of private produce was denounced by the Party as evidence of ‘rural capitalism’. All markets were banned.

In cities – In industry in GLF Industries were taken over to create SOEs. However like Communes SOEs were very inefficient.

**3. Economic policies met their ideological aim of establishing control of rural and urban workforce:**

E.G economic policies also sought to spread communist ideology and tighten CCP control of the workforce. In the countryside this was done with the establishment of Communes. Peasants now completely dependent on the state. Needed internal passports to travel from one commune to another.

In cities factories and industrial plants organised on socialist lines. Workers organised into Danwei or work units which limited their freedom to move jobs. Workers dependent on the state ‘iron rice bowl’

**Paragraph on economic policies not meeting their aims:**

**4. Mao’s industrial policies ultimately failed to meet the ambitious targets set and prevented China from building the modern economy it set out to do.**

Examine falls in industrial output/heavy industry during the GLF and reasons for the falls e.g. Stopping of assistance from USSR, Failure of SOEs (lack of efficiency); distrust of experts etc.

**5. Mao’s agricultural policies failed to raise agricultural production leading to a widespread famine.**

Examine the failure of collective farms/communes to raise grain/food production due to a loss of incentives and the adoption of lysenkoism coupled with the distraction of mass campaigns e.g. 4 pests, furnaces etc. e.g. It took until 1965 for agricultural production to return to the same level as pre GLF levels.