

# AS AND A LEVEL *HISTORY A*

Helping you make the most of the new approach –  
a brief guide to our exciting new specifications  
for first teaching in September 2015

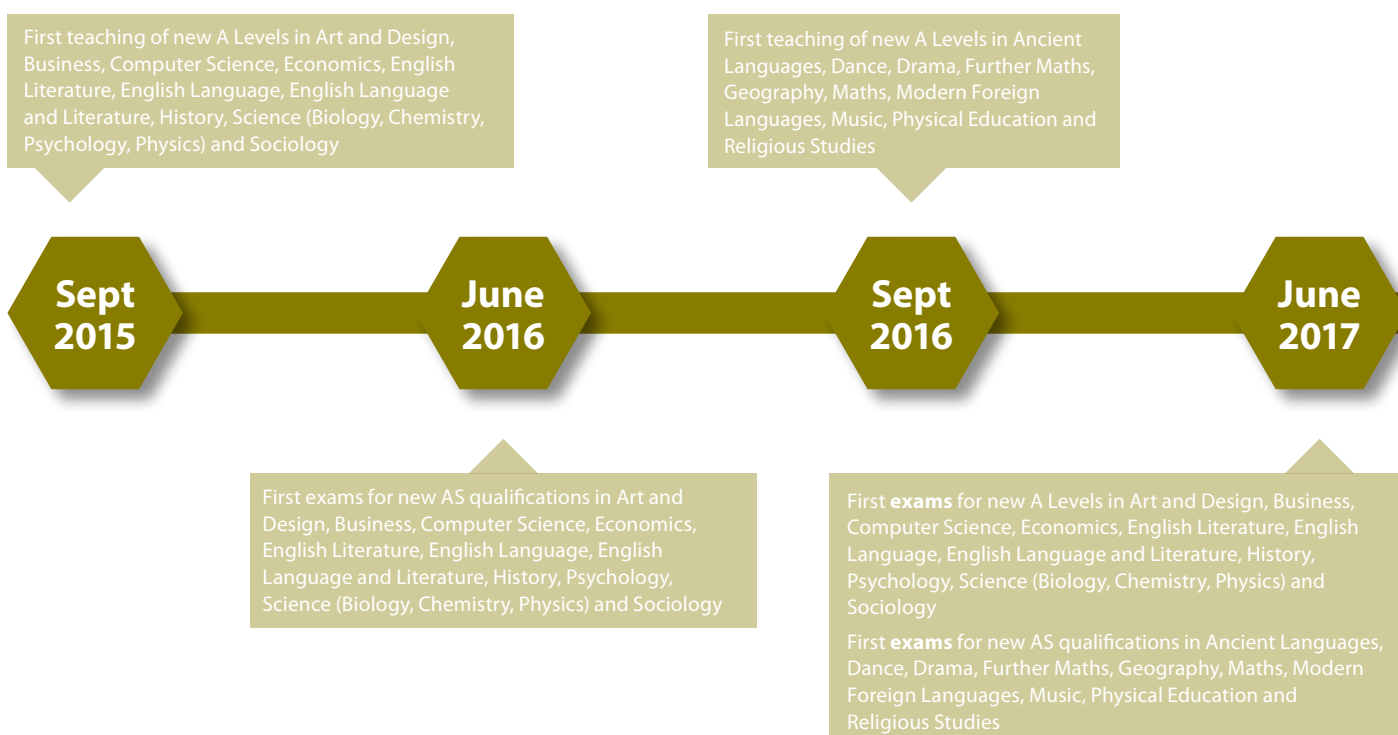


# WHAT REFORM MEANS FOR YOU

In February 2013 the former Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove, asked Ofqual to implement changes leading to new A Levels. The Government has stated that the purpose of taking A Levels is primarily for entry to university and that some changes are needed so students are better prepared to start their university course.

OCR's new qualifications for first teaching from September 2015 have been redeveloped to engage and enthuse you and your students, and we've worked hard to create high-quality resources to support the teaching of them. Following our accreditation by Ofqual, this summary brochure introduces you to the new qualification and shows you how we can help make the transition easier.

## A LEVEL TIMELINE



## Changes to assessment

### A Levels from 2015 – linear assessment

- New A Levels will be fully linear so assessment of a student's knowledge and understanding of the whole course takes place at the end of two years of study. (There'll be no exams in January.) The first assessment of two-year courses that start in September 2015 will be in June 2017.

### Proposed changes for AS Levels

- The new AS Level qualifications, for first teaching in September 2015, won't count towards the final grade of an A Level, but will be separate, stand-alone qualifications in their own right. The new AS qualifications will remain broadly at their current standard. In some subjects, it may be appropriate for the AS to be designed to be co-teachable with the first year of the A Level. The first assessment of the new AS Levels is planned for June 2016.

First **teaching** of new A Levels and stand-alone AS Levels in a range of further subjects

**Sept  
2017**

First **exams** for new A Levels in a range of further subjects

**June  
2018**

**June  
2019**

First **exams** for new A Levels in Ancient Languages, Dance, Design and Technology, Drama, Further Maths, Geography, Maths, Modern Foreign Languages, Music, Physical Education and Religious Studies  
First **AS exams** in a range of further subjects

## WHY CHOOSE OCR?

Choose OCR and you've got the reassurance that you're working with one of the UK's leading awarding bodies. Our new AS and A Level qualifications have been developed in consultation with teachers, employers and higher education to provide students with qualifications that are relevant to them and meet their needs.

We're part of the Cambridge Assessment Group, Europe's largest assessment agency and a department of the University of Cambridge. Cambridge Assessment plays a leading role in developing and delivering assessments throughout the world, operating in over 150 countries.

We work with a range of education providers, including schools, colleges, workplaces and other institutions in both the public and private sectors. Over 13,000 centres choose our A Levels, GCSEs, and vocational qualifications including Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals and Cambridge Progression.

We believe in developing specifications that help you bring the subject to life and inspire your students to achieve more. They're designed to be straightforward and accessible, so you can tailor the delivery of the course to suit your students' needs.

## MEET THE HISTORY TEAM

We have a dedicated team of people working on our new History qualifications, including:

### Michael Goddard

Subject Specialist, History

### Clare Trevatt

Subject Specialist, History

### Grant Robertson

Subject Specialist, History

Find out more about our history team at:

[ocr.org.uk/historyteam](https://ocr.org.uk/historyteam)

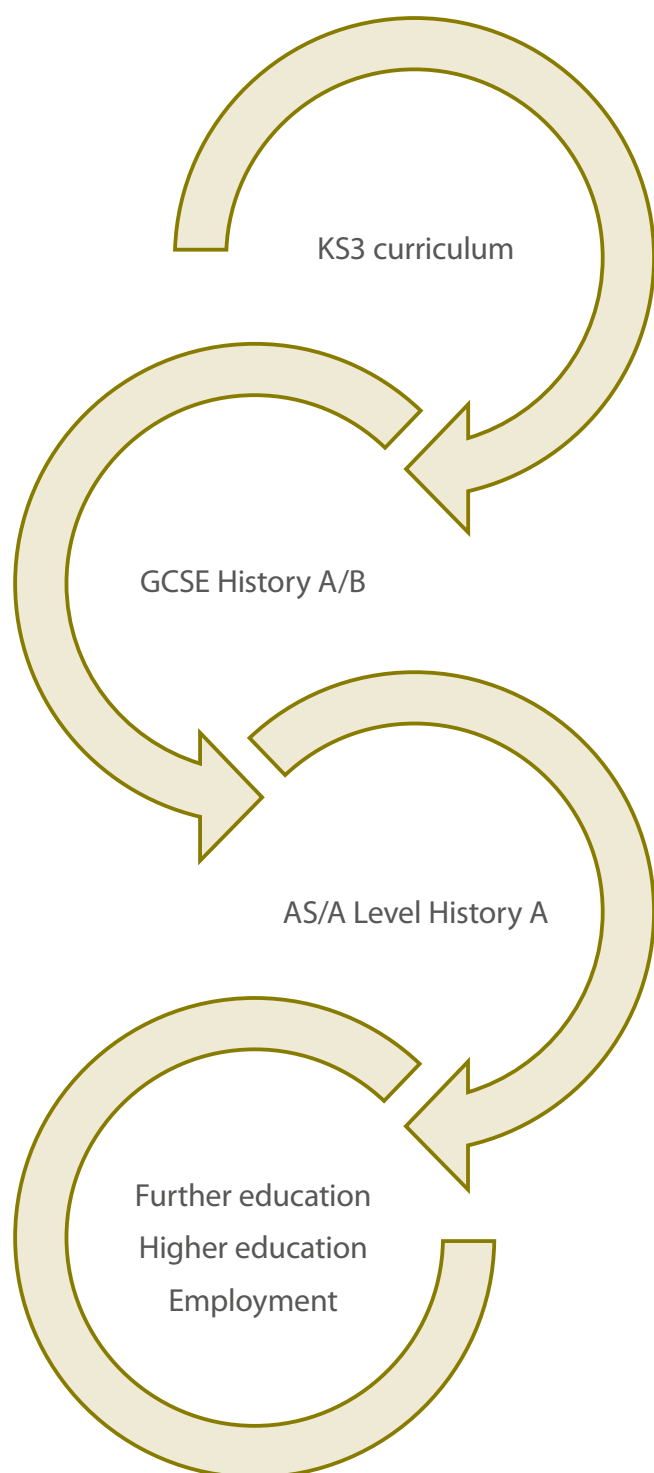
### HAVE ANY QUESTIONS AND WANT TO TALK TO US? WANT TO FIND OUT MORE?

Our aim is to assist you however we can. As well as giving you a toolkit of support services and resources to choose from, we're also here to help you with specialist advice, guidance and support for those times when you simply need a more individual service. Here's how to reach our Customer Contact Centre:

By phone: **01223 553998**

By email: [history@ocr.org.uk](mailto:history@ocr.org.uk)

## PROGRESSION PATHWAYS



The transition from GCSE History to AS/A Level is supported through the study of History at GCSE level. While some elements of the content can be replicated (e.g. the study of Germany 1919–1945 at GCSE and the study of Germany 1919–1963 at AS/A Level), the skills learned during a successful GCSE History course are enhanced and used to explore new topics at AS and A Level.

The AS and A Level specifications provide a suitable foundation for the study of History or related courses in further and higher education. They also offer worthwhile courses of study for students who don't wish to progress further in the subject. The various skills required by the specifications provide opportunities for progression directly into employment. Equally, they contribute to students' lifelong learning, especially through Key Skills.

# INTRODUCING...

## AS AND A LEVEL HISTORY (FROM SEPTEMBER 2015)

### OUR VISION

It is our strong desire to make sure that OCR History captivates students and develops a desire within them to continue learning beyond the confines of the classroom. We've never thought that there's any one 'correct' approach to History as a subject. It's too valuable and simply too massive to be limited to a mere handful of approved options. There's no core content in History, and our view is that the logical extension of this is that teachers should have as much professional freedom as possible to approach the subject in their chosen valid way. Centres should have the opportunity to deliver the history of pre-colonial non-western civilisations and peoples, for example, as well as British and European history, and should be able to do so with confidence. Variety is, therefore, a key influence on our vision. We've set high minimum standards for our specification content. Our specifications will contain innovative and exciting concepts and ideas for teaching within the classroom, which will be supported by new or high quality existing resources. We'll also develop other ways to support you as you deliver the content. These will include online platforms, face-to-face INSETs, traditional published resources and adaptable electronic ones. We'll aim to support and facilitate the good practice we know is already going on in the History teaching community.

Our primary way of doing this is through the development and launch of our innovative Specification Creator tool. This is a simple mechanism through which your centre can initially check the validity of the courses it designs, but which then allows us to recommend resources and to create communities of teachers delivering the same option. It means that, in your History department, you can in effect create your own bespoke specifications from the options available, giving us and you a level of individual control that will filter right through to improving the quality of marking and the issuing of results. We're fully aware of the fundamental issue of quality of marking, and we're determined that the assessments themselves must be clear – mark schemes unambiguous, and the key terms defined. Too often abstract terms are used without sufficiently clear definition or exemplification, and this can lead to confusion. The production of straightforward questions, tasks and mark schemes for History is a key aim. OCR History will provide a fantastic curriculum for your students to ignite and engage their passions and interests. Our content will aim to create independent learners, critical thinkers and decision-makers – all personal assets that can make them stand out as they progress to higher education and/or the workplace.

## WHY CHOOSE OCR AS AND A LEVEL HISTORY?

We've given you a unique level of flexibility with few restrictions; simply pick one option from each unit group and combine these in the way that is best for you.

**Unit group 1** of both the AS and A Level courses is a British period study and enquiry. The two parts of this unit between them constitute a substantial and coherent element of British history.

The enquiry is a source-based study that immediately precedes or follows the outline period study: for example, a Churchill 1930–1951 enquiry with post-war British politics 1951–97 period study, or Anglo-Saxon to Norman England 1035–1107 period study with an enquiry on William II. There are 13 options.

The assessment for this unit therefore has two sections. The second section, dealing with the period study, gives students the chance to demonstrate their extended writing skills by providing a choice of questions, from which they answer one. The first section is a document study, giving students the chance to demonstrate their source skills.

**Unit group 2** of both the AS and A Level courses is a non-British study, similar to Unit group 1 but excluding the enquiry. There are 24 topics, with options ranging from popular and established topics such as Germany 1919–1963 and the Cold War 1941–1995, to new and exciting topics like Genghis Khan and the Explosion from the Steppes c. 1167–1405, and Japan 1854–1937. Students are given a choice of questions, from which they must choose one and answer both parts in the A Level. In the AS Level, candidates have a choice of one essay from two, and one interpretation question, drawn from one of the two nominated key topics.

**Unit group 3** (A Level only) is a historical themes and interpretations unit. This involves a thematic study covering an extended period of history of at least 100 years, and a depth study looking at key events, individuals or issues within the theme. There are therefore two elements to the assessment of the historical themes and interpretations unit:

- The thematic essay, which requires students to consider developments over approximately 100 years (they answer two questions from a choice of three).
- The in-depth interpretations element where students use their detailed knowledge of specified events, individuals or issues to comprehend, analyse and evaluate the ways in which the past has been interpreted by historians.

**Unit group 4** (A Level only) is the internally assessed element of the course and provides students with the opportunity to explore a topic of personal interest through coursework.

### Specification Creator

Students are required to complete a variety of topics drawn from a period of not less than 200 years. The Specification Creator tool on our website is a quick and easy way to check that options chosen create a valid course of study. Please note, the 200 year rule can only be satisfied via examined units. Coursework does not count towards this rule.

Use of the Specification Creator tool before learners begin to study the course is mandatory in order to ensure that the rules of combination are met.

### How are these qualifications assessed?

- Unit groups 1–3 are assessed entirely through written examinations that are externally marked.
- All examinations take place at the end of the course (one year for AS Level and two years for A Level), available every June.
- Unit group 4 is assessed internally, then moderated externally and submitted before the examinations begin, in May.
- Students entered on an AS Level course have an additional question set included in Unit group 2 to ensure that a full range of Assessment Objectives are met.

### Dates for first examination

- AS Level – first examinations available from May 2016.
- A Level – first examinations available from May 2017.



# THE KEY BENEFITS

## FOR TEACHERS

The ethos and strengths of our previous specifications have been maintained and enhanced to ensure that you can teach the course straightaway.

- The qualifications provide a unique level of flexibility that allows you to use all of your expertise and resources to construct the most appropriate course for your student's interest.
- There is a range of content options for you to choose from, supported by innovative and exciting support material.
- The assessments are instantly recognisable to current centres and build on existing good practice.
- While the study of British history comprises a substantial element, students study the history of more than one country or state.
- The coursework element enables your students to explore a topic in history in which they have an interest.
- The content contains a variety of spiritual, moral, ethical, social, legislative, economic and cultural issues to easily satisfy your own audits.
- The course enables students to develop as learners and as individuals, providing an outstanding basis for progression to university and the workplace.





## FOR STUDENTS

AS and A Level History challenges students' minds and develops their abilities in a number of key ways:

- **Research**  
A key aspect of any History course is to develop research skills.
- **Independence**  
When studying History, students work on their own to complete tasks.
- **Analysis**  
Any historian must be able to take and understand information before applying it to solve a puzzle.
- **Communication**  
The ability to discuss key issues verbally and in writing is vital to any future success. Historians use this skill daily and so universities and employers will value someone who can articulate their thoughts in a clear and professional way.
- **Time management**  
The skill of prioritising work is very important. By working through questions and completing coursework, an A Level History student will have effectively developed this skill.
- **ICT**  
History students will develop their ICT skills in History, from using simple word processors through to scouring the web for that vital piece of information that an essay just can't do without.
- **Working with others**  
History can help develop this skill through classroom activities.
- **Problem solving**  
History is full of problems that need solving. The skills used to solve historical conundrums are the same as those used to solve real-life issues.
- **Planning and organising**  
History teaches students how to plan effectively to complete any tasks.
- **Drive and determination**  
Any successful History A Level student will have shown the drive and determination to succeed – exactly what an employer or university will be looking for!

# HISTORY A AT A GLANCE

## AS AND A LEVEL COURSE OVERVIEW CONTENT OPTIONS FOR HISTORY A

All units in Unit group 1: British period study and enquiry are externally assessed (written papers).

| Unit group   | Group title                      | Unit entry code | Title                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Historical date |        |
|--------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|--------|
|              |                                  |                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Earliest        | Latest |
| Unit group 1 | British period study and enquiry | Y101            | Alfred and the Making of England 871–1016<br>(Enquiry topic: Alfred the Great)<br>(This unit cannot be taken in combination with unit Y302 The Viking Age c.790–1066)                                                                     | 871             | 1016   |
|              |                                  | Y102            | Anglo-Saxon England and the Norman Conquest 1035–1107<br>(Enquiry topic: Norman England 1087–1107)                                                                                                                                        | 1035            | 1107   |
|              |                                  | Y103            | England 1199–1272<br>(Enquiry topic: King John 1199–1216)                                                                                                                                                                                 | 1199            | 1272   |
|              |                                  | Y104            | England 1377–1455<br>(Enquiry topic: Richard II 1377–1399)                                                                                                                                                                                | 1377            | 1455   |
|              |                                  | Y105            | England 1445–1509: Lancastrians, Yorkists and Henry VII<br>(Enquiry topic: Wars of the Roses 1445–1461)                                                                                                                                   | 1445            | 1509   |
|              |                                  | Y106            | England 1485–1558: the Early Tudors<br>(Enquiry topic: Mid Tudor Crises 1547–1558)<br>(This unit cannot be taken in combination with units Y306 Rebellion and Disorder under the Tudors 1485–1603 or Y307 Tudor Foreign Policy 1485–1603) | 1485            | 1558   |
|              |                                  | Y107            | England 1547–1603: the Later Tudors<br>(Enquiry topic: Mid Tudor Crises 1547–1558)<br>(This unit cannot be taken in combination with units Y306 Rebellion and Disorder under the Tudors 1485–1603 or Y307 Tudor Foreign Policy 1485–1603) | 1547            | 1603   |
|              |                                  | Y108            | The Early Stuarts and the Origins of the Civil War 1603–1660<br>(Enquiry topic: The Execution of Charles I and the Interregnum 1646–1660)                                                                                                 | 1603            | 1660   |
|              |                                  | Y109            | The Making of Georgian Britain 1678–c.1760<br>(Enquiry topic: The Glorious Revolution 1678–1689)                                                                                                                                          | 1678            | c.1760 |
|              |                                  | Y110            | From Pitt to Peel: Britain 1783–1853<br>(Enquiry topic: Peel and the Age of Reform 1832–1853)                                                                                                                                             | 1783            | 1853   |
|              |                                  | Y111            | Liberals, Conservatives and the Rise of Labour: Britain 1846–1918<br>(Enquiry topic: England and a New Century c.1900–1918)                                                                                                               | 1846            | 1918   |
|              |                                  | Y112            | Britain 1900–1951<br>(Enquiry topic: England and a New Century c.1900–1918)                                                                                                                                                               | 1900            | 1951   |
|              |                                  | Y113            | Britain 1930–1997 (Enquiry topic: Churchill 1930–1951)                                                                                                                                                                                    | 1930            | 1997   |

All units in Unit group 2: Non-British period study is externally assessed (written papers).

| Unit group   | Group title              | Unit entry code | Title                                                                                                         | Historical date |        |
|--------------|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|--------|
|              |                          |                 |                                                                                                               | Earliest        | Latest |
| Unit group 2 | Non-British period study | Y201            | The Rise of Islam c.550–750                                                                                   | c.550           | 750    |
|              |                          | Y202            | Charlemagne 768–814                                                                                           | 768             | 814    |
|              |                          | Y203            | The Crusades and the Crusader States 1095–1192                                                                | 1095            | 1192   |
|              |                          | Y204            | Genghis Khan and the Explosion from the Steppes c.1167–1405                                                   | c.1167          | 1405   |
|              |                          | Y205            | Exploration, Encounters and Empire 1445–1570                                                                  | 1445            | 1570   |
|              |                          | Y206            | Spain 1469–1556                                                                                               | 1469            | 1556   |
|              |                          | Y207            | The German Reformation and the rule of Charles V 1500–1559                                                    | 1500            | 1559   |
|              |                          | Y208            | Philip II 1556–1598                                                                                           | 1556            | 1598   |
|              |                          | Y209            | African Kingdoms c.1400–c.1800: four case studies                                                             | c.1400          | c.1800 |
|              |                          | Y210            | Russia 1645–1741                                                                                              | 1645            | 1741   |
|              |                          | Y211            | The Rise and Decline of the Mughal Empire in India 1526–1739                                                  | 1526            | 1739   |
|              |                          | Y212            | The American Revolution 1740–1796                                                                             | 1740            | 1796   |
|              |                          | Y213            | The French Revolution and the rule of Napoleon 1774–1815                                                      | 1774            | 1815   |
|              |                          | Y214            | France 1814–1870                                                                                              | 1814            | 1870   |
|              |                          | Y215            | Italy and Unification 1789–1896                                                                               | 1789            | 1896   |
|              |                          | Y216            | The USA in the 19th Century: Westward expansion and Civil War 1803–c.1890                                     | 1803            | c.1890 |
|              |                          | Y217            | Japan 1853–1937                                                                                               | 1853            | 1937   |
|              |                          | Y218            | International Relations 1890–1941                                                                             | 1890            | 1941   |
|              |                          | Y219            | Russia 1894–1941<br>(This unit cannot be taken in combination with unit Y318 Russia and its Rulers 1855–1964) | 1894            | 1941   |
|              |                          | Y220            | Italy 1896–1943                                                                                               | 1896            | 1943   |
|              |                          | Y221            | Democracy and Dictatorships in Germany 1919–1963                                                              | 1919            | 1963   |
|              |                          | Y222            | The Cold War in Asia 1945–1993                                                                                | 1945            | 1993   |
|              |                          | Y223            | The Cold War in Europe 1941–1995                                                                              | 1941            | 1995   |
|              |                          | Y224            | Apartheid and Reconciliation: South African Politics 1948–1999                                                | 1948            | 1999   |

All units in Unit group 3: Thematic Study and Historical Interpretations are externally assessed (written papers).

| Unit group   | Group title                                   | Unit entry code | Title                                                                                                                                                                        | Historical date             |                             |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
|              |                                               |                 |                                                                                                                                                                              | Earliest                    | Latest                      |
| Unit group 3 | Thematic study and historical interpretations | Y301            | The Early Anglo-Saxons c.400–800                                                                                                                                             | c.400                       | 800                         |
|              |                                               | Y302            | The Viking Age c.790–1066<br>(This unit cannot be taken in combination with unit Y101 Alfred and the Making of England 871–1016)                                             | c.790                       | 1066                        |
|              |                                               | Y303            | English Government and the Church 1066–1216                                                                                                                                  | 1066                        | 1216                        |
|              |                                               | Y304            | The Church and Medieval Heresy c.1100–1437                                                                                                                                   | c.1100                      | 1437                        |
|              |                                               | Y305            | The Renaissance c.1400–c.1600                                                                                                                                                | c.1400                      | c.1600                      |
|              |                                               | Y306            | Rebellion and Disorder under the Tudors 1485–1603<br>(This unit cannot be taken in combination with units Y106 England 1485–1558 or Y107 England 1547–1603)                  | 1485                        | 1603                        |
|              |                                               | Y307            | Tudor Foreign Policy 1485–1603<br>(This unit cannot be taken in combination with units Y106 England 1485–1558: the Early Tudors or Y107 England 1547–1603: the Later Tudors) | 1485                        | 1603                        |
|              |                                               | Y308            | The Catholic Reformation 1492–1610                                                                                                                                           | 1492                        | 1610                        |
|              |                                               | Y309            | The Ascendancy of the Ottoman Empire 1453–1606                                                                                                                               | 1453                        | 1606                        |
|              |                                               | Y310            | The Development of the Nation State: France 1498–1610                                                                                                                        | 1498                        | 1610                        |
|              |                                               | Y311            | The Origins and Growth of the British Empire 1558–1783                                                                                                                       | 1558                        | 1783                        |
|              |                                               | Y312            | Popular Culture and the Witchcraze of the 16th and 17th Centuries                                                                                                            | 16 <sup>th</sup><br>Century | 17 <sup>th</sup><br>Century |
|              |                                               | Y313            | The Ascendancy of France 1610–1715                                                                                                                                           | 1610                        | 1715                        |
|              |                                               | Y314            | The Challenge of German Nationalism 1789–1919                                                                                                                                | 1789                        | 1919                        |
|              |                                               | Y315            | The Changing Nature of Warfare 1792–1945                                                                                                                                     | 1792                        | 1945                        |
|              |                                               | Y316            | Britain and Ireland 1791–1921                                                                                                                                                | 1791                        | 1921                        |
|              |                                               | Y317            | China and its Rulers 1839–1989                                                                                                                                               | 1839                        | 1989                        |
|              |                                               | Y318            | Russia and its Rulers 1855–1964<br>(This unit cannot be taken in combination with unit Y219 Russia 1894–1941)                                                                | 1855                        | 1964                        |
|              |                                               | Y319            | Civil Rights in the USA 1865–1992                                                                                                                                            | 1865                        | 1992                        |
|              |                                               | Y320            | From Colonialism to Independence: The British Empire 1857–1965                                                                                                               | 1857                        | 1965                        |
|              |                                               | Y321            | The Middle East 1908–2011: Ottomans to Arab Spring                                                                                                                           | 1908                        | 2011                        |

## GROUP 4 – NON-EXAM ASSESSMENT: TOPIC-BASED ESSAY

The History A Topic-based essay is an independently researched essay of 3,000–4,000 words in length. This unit is a non-exam assessment. The work will be marked by centres and moderated by OCR.

### Choice of essay topic

The essay should include an explanation and analysis of different perspectives on a clearly-stated historical issue, drawing on a range of primary and secondary material. It will therefore utilise the skills and understanding developed elsewhere in the course. As an independent enquiry using a range of sources and interpretations, the essay will require students to develop an understanding of how historians work.

The essay must be based on the independent investigation of a historical issue. The issue may arise from the study of a period or topic in Unit groups 1–3, or it may be on a topic, or from a period, that the learner has not studied as part of the A Level course. The topic for this essay cannot be the same as that chosen for the in-depth interpretation topics studied within Unit group 3.

### Learners should choose their own essay title, but all titles must be checked by OCR

Centres must use the Topic-based essay Title(s) Proposal Form to submit all chosen titles, along with the centre's choice for Unit group 3 to OCR for approval. You can access the Topic-based essay Title(s) Proposal

Form through the OCR website (see also Appendix 5e). Centres must submit their Topic-based essay Title(s) Proposal Form every series even if the titles have been approved previously. There is no restriction on the number of candidates choosing the same title, however, centres must ensure that work is independent (see the 'selection of sources and interpretations' below).

OCR will verify that the in-depth interpretations topics studied by the learners in Unit group 3 have not been used as a basis for the Topic-based essay and will confirm to the centres that appropriate essay titles have been chosen. OCR consultants may contact centres requesting further information in order to be able to confirm the appropriateness of the title(s). Centres must wait until they have received confirmation from OCR that the chosen titles are suitable before learners begin working on their essays.

### Topic-based essay assessment

The Unit assesses AO1, AO2 and AO3 through one piece of written work. Half of the marks will be awarded for AO1, and thus the essay should be driven by use of knowledge and understanding to reach substantiated judgements. A range of primary (AO2) and secondary (AO3) sources should be evident and analysed, but formal critical evaluation in itself is less important than the discerning use of evidence to support analysis. Further advice and exemplification is available in the Coursework Guidance booklet.

## THE NON-EXAM ASSESSMENT TOPICS CHOSEN CAN ADD COHERENCE TO THE OVERALL COURSE IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

### Learners may extend their knowledge of aspects of the past already studied

An example of this may be that the French Revolution and Napoleon has been studied for Unit group 2, but a learner has a special interest in the War of the Third Coalition, or the Hundred Days War. A learner has studied US Civil Rights in Unit group 3 but may wish to consider the career of Martin Luther King in greater depth. The reign of Elizabeth I has been studied in Unit group 1, but a learner may wish to consider the issue of why she did not marry in greater depth. Learners may not complete non-exam assessment on any of the three in-depth interpretations topics they study in Unit group 3.

### Learners may wish to build on what they know to study related aspects not specifically required by the specification

An example of this may be that while US Civil Rights has led to the study of rights for women, African-Americans and trade unions, a learner is interested in knowing more about gay rights. A learner may have enjoyed studying Elizabeth I and may wish to pursue a cultural aspect of the Elizabethan age. A learner may have studied China in Unit group 3 between 1839 and 1989 but may wish to know more of Chinese history in an earlier era.

### Learners may wish to study a topic which is not related to other topics studied in order to extend the range of their historical knowledge

The focus of their studies may have been the modern period but they may wish to investigate something from an earlier period, or from a different geographical area. Such a study would involve using historical skills but would be a broadening rather than a deepening of knowledge.

### Learners may wish to study a topic which involves a different sort of history than they have studied

Thus they may choose an aspect of social history to balance a course which has been more focused on political history. They may wish to study an aspect of local history when their main course has been predominantly based on national history. They may wish to pursue a cultural or intellectual topic – a study of the arts or philosophy or literature in a particular period. They may wish to focus on an economic topic or a scientific topic. This could well come out of interests and enthusiasms in other disciplines they have been studying. A love of modern languages and history, for example, might be linked by studying an aspect of France, Spain, Italy, China or Russia. This could involve looking at evidence in French, Spanish, Italian, Mandarin or Russian, or merely extending knowledge and understanding of the history of a particular country whose language has been studied.

### Learners may have an interest in a particular topic for its own sake

This could emerge, for example, from their family, where they live, a hobby, a place they have visited, something they have seen in an exhibition, or a play, novel or film that has not featured in the main A Level History course. Some examples might be the impact of industrial growth on a town or a region; the impact of civil war on a local area; the development of culture in a particular city; the impact of religious or social change on a locality; the significance of a particular person, or events which have impacted on past members of their family.

### Selection of Sources and Interpretations

Candidates must use a range of both primary (sources) and secondary (interpretations) material. A 'range' is considered to be 10 to 15 in total; however, where appropriate candidates may use more or fewer. The balance between sources and interpretations will depend upon the topic studied, but candidates should choose a sufficient variety and quantity of each to allow them to explore their chosen topic in sufficient depth.

The topic must be independently researched by the learner. Centres may provide guidance regarding where learners can access appropriate sources and/or interpretations, and discuss the subsequent selection with learners. While candidates may inevitably select the same key texts in researching an interpretation, such as AJP Taylor on the Origins of the Second World War, or Goldhagen on The Holocaust, centres may not provide learners with pre-selected compilations of sources and interpretations.

## HISTORY A ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

### AS LEVEL

| Unit group                                                | Content overview                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | AOs targeted                                       | Assessment structure                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Unit group 1</b><br><br>50% of AS<br>1 hour 30 minutes | <b>BRITISH PERIOD STUDY AND ENQUIRY</b><br>Students study one of the 13 available options, each of which constitutes a substantial and coherent element of British history. The enquiry is a source-based study which immediately precedes or follows the outline period study<br><b>CO-TEACHABLE WITH A LEVEL – BUT WITH QUESTIONS SET AT A DEMONSTRABLY LOWER STANDARD (FOR EXAMPLE, USING FEWER SOURCES, AND WITH LESS DEMANDING MARK SCHEMES)</b> | AO1 –<br>20% of total<br><br>AO2 –<br>30% of total | Students answer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One period study essay from a choice of two (AO1, 20 raw marks)</li> <li>• One document-based depth study containing two questions (AO2, 30 raw marks)</li> </ul> Paper total: 50 raw marks |
| <b>Unit group 2</b><br><br>50% of AS<br>1 hour 30 minutes | <b>NON-BRITISH PERIOD STUDY</b><br>The content will be the same as in the A Level units, but AS students will have to use the content they have been taught to answer a question targeting AO3 in the exam. This could be done in a few lessons at the end of the course                                                                                                                                                                              | AO1 –<br>30% of total<br><br>AO3 –<br>20% of total | Students answer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One period study essay (AO1, 30 raw marks)</li> <li>• One interpretations question from a choice of two (AO3, 20 raw marks)</li> </ul> Paper total: 50 raw marks                            |



# HISTORY A ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

## A LEVEL

| Unit group                                                                | Content overview                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | AOs targeted                                                                  | Assessment structure                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Unit group 1</b><br><br>25% of A Level<br>1 hour 30 minutes            | <b>BRITISH PERIOD STUDY AND ENQUIRY</b><br>Students study one of the 13 available options, each of which constitutes a substantial and coherent element of British history. The enquiry is a source-based study which immediately precedes or follows the outline period study                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | AO1 –<br>10% of total<br><br>AO2 –<br>15% of total                            | Students answer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One period study essay from a choice of two (AO1, 20 raw marks)</li> <li>• One document-based depth study question (AO2, 30 raw marks)</li> </ul> Paper total: 50 raw marks                           |
| <b>Unit group 2</b><br><br>15% of A Level<br>1 hour                       | <b>NON-BRITISH PERIOD STUDY</b><br>Students take one of 24 available options                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | AO1 –<br>15% of total                                                         | Students answer both parts from one of the two questions set: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One 'mini-essay' (AO1, 10 raw marks)</li> <li>• One period study essay (AO1, 20 raw marks)</li> </ul> Paper total: 30 raw marks                          |
| <b>Unit group 3</b><br><br>40% of A Level<br>2 hours 30 minutes           | <b>THEMATIC STUDY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A study of a theme over a period of approximately 100 years</li> </ul> <b>INTERPRETATIONS ELEMENT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A study of interpretations that arise from the thematic study. These are not interpretations of the 'theme'; rather, they are depth studies on prominent aspects or individuals. The interpretations depth studies (three per theme) will be listed in the specification, but the topic for the exam will not be pre-announced</li> </ul> Students take one of 21 available options | AO1 –<br>25% of total<br><br>AO2 –<br>15% of total                            | Students answer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two theme questions from a choice of three, all covering 100 years (each question AO1, 25 raw marks)</li> <li>• One interpretations question (AO3, 30 raw marks)</li> </ul> Paper total: 80 raw marks |
| <b>Unit group 4</b><br><br>Coursework<br>Personal study<br>20% of A Level | <b>A SINGLE 3,000 – 4,000 WORD ESSAY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A personal and independent study of the student's choice</li> <li>• An investigation must include evidence of using primary and secondary sources, but the bulk of the marks will be for reaching a substantiated judgement through demonstrating and organising concepts and knowledge</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                              | AO1 –<br>10% of total<br><br>AO2 –<br>5% of total<br><br>AO3 –<br>5% of total | Centre-marked,<br>board-moderated<br>Assessment total:<br>40 raw marks<br>(20 AO1, 10 AO2, 10 AO3)                                                                                                                                                              |

# SPECIMEN ASSESSMENT MATERIALS CONTINUED

## SECTION A

Read the two passages and then answer Question 1.

1. Evaluate the interpretations in both of the two passages and explain which you think is more convincing as an explanation of the reasons for the Pilgrimage of Grace.

[30]

### PASSAGE A

The common view sees the rebellion as the protest of a whole community – ‘northern society’ – against the breach with Rome and especially the Dissolution of the monasteries, against the new learning and the King’s autocracy, complicated by the social and economic grievances of its various component parts. The Pontefract Articles, which most fully sum up the aims of the movement, range comprehensively enough. The largest set of demands touched religion. However, there must be grave doubts whether the articles constitute anything like a representative programme, and worse doubts about the extent to which the rebellion as a whole arose from the issues they enshrined. It has always been recognised that the different parts of the north did not all rise for the same reasons. The crucial issues gather around the monasteries because it is usually held that the Pilgrimage was above all a protest at the Dissolution and a vote of confidence in the holiness and usefulness of the northern houses of religion. The monks, it is true, had retained more popularity in the north and especially in Lancashire; but no houses were restored in Lincolnshire and few in Yorkshire, anti-monastic sentiment of the familiar kind made itself heard there too, and the truly popular rising in the north west made no issue of the Dissolution.

However, the Pilgrimage originated in a decision by one of the court factions to take the battle out of the court into the nation, to raise the standard of loyal rebellion as the only way left to them if they were to succeed in reversing the defeats suffered at court and in Parliament, and in forcing the King to change his policy. In the plotting around the Imperial Ambassador this leadership had not been alone; the ambassador compiled a long list of allegedly disaffected noblemen willing to join in rebellion against Henry.

Adapted from: G.R Elton, *Reform and Reformation: England, 1509-58*, published in 1977

## PASSAGE B

The twenty-four Pontefract articles were compiled from complaints sent from all over the north, and were agreed by the assembly of representatives. They embraced many divergent interests: there were three economic articles; six on legal and administrative matters; six political articles and nine dealt with religious grievances.

The secular demands were late additions to the basic religious grievances, rather than vice versa, and it was the local impact of Henry's Reformation which had produced the rebellion. When the commons were active in rebellion, it was not in refusing rents or pulling down enclosures; it was in protesting at the abolition of traditional religious practices, or in forcing nervous priests to pray for the pope. However, it was not the suppression of papal authority that brought violent conflict, it was the suppression of monasteries. Laymen did not fight for the papal primacy, nor for the liberties of the Church; they did not take risks to protect the clergy from royal taxes or royal visitation.

Above all the commons defended and restored monasteries. As early as mid-September four parishes in the Yorkshire dales had taken an oath to protect the monasteries, some chased off suppression commissioners. In all, the rebels restored at least sixteen of the twenty-six northern monasteries that had actually been dissolved.

Adapted from: C. Haigh, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics, and Society under the Tudors*, published in 1993

## SECTION B

Answer **TWO** of the following three questions.

- 2\*. 'Poor leadership was the main reason why rebellions in Tudor England failed.'  
How far do you agree with this view? [25]
- 3\*. 'The Western Rebellion, more than any other rebellion, presented the most serious threat to Tudor government.'  
How far do you agree? [25]
- 4\*. To what extent were Tudor governments able to maintain political stability in the period from 1485 to 1603? [25]

## WHAT STAYS THE SAME, WHAT CHANGES?

The content and requirements of our current History A have been largely carried over to the new A Level to minimise the impact of change on current good practice. The options available in the current period study units F961 and F962 have been preserved, with the period study units of our new Unit group 1 topics (on British history) having an additional enquiry element (similar to the current F963).

The current F964 enquiry topics are all still available, but no longer as source-based papers. The current A2 themes paper (F966) will remain, as our new Unit group 3, but with the addition of some in-depth studies focusing on prominent individuals, issues or events from within the theme. Coursework stays, but will constitute just one piece, rather than two, and will be driven by knowledge and argument, more than by sources.

## HISTORY AS AND A LEVEL CO-TEACHING

Effective co-teaching of OCR's AS and A Level History is easily achievable with only minor concessions to the different assessment requirements for each element of the course. There is a major overlap between the content explored and skills developed by the two courses, while the assessment methods in the examination papers differ slightly for appropriate AS / A Level demand. There are some areas of teaching, e.g. interpretations, which differ between AS and A Level students, but this does not impact adversely on the co-teachability of the two courses. In fact both groups of students will benefit throughout from the ways the AS has been designed to build towards the A Level. Both of the two components of the AS course have equivalent elements in the full A Level. The content of units 1 and 2 between AS and A Level are identical. The assessment proves the main difference and this will be highlighted in the section below.

### CO-TEACHING THE BRITISH PERIOD STUDY AND ENQUIRY

AS students are given three sources, as opposed to four in the enquiry section of the exam and have two questions to answer, as opposed to one. The questions are set at a demonstrably lower level than the A Level and will include a question assessing the usefulness of a particular source. In the essay question, the top level of the generic mark scheme is removed for the AS when compared to the A Level to reflect the lower demand. The content for this unit is the same between AS and A Level.

### CO-TEACHING THE NON-BRITISH PERIOD STUDY

AS students will sit a different exam in structure to the A Level students. For the A Level assessment of this unit group, each unit will have two questions set and learners will answer both parts from one of the questions. Learners will be required to answer both a traditional 'Period Study' essay (as in a Unit group 1) and a shorter question assessing the significance of two events, pertaining to a different key topic from within the option chosen. For AS students, they will be set an additional question dealing with historians' interpretations. Two of four key topics for each option are identified for this purpose, and learners should be familiar with different interpretations of these topics, and able to use their knowledge to evaluate them. As a result, learners studying the AS paper will have one essay question and one interpretation question. It is envisaged that the interpretation element could be taught in a few lessons at the end of the course and OCR will provide additional guidance for this. Alternatively, it could be integrated into the teaching of the unit as many of the debates will be covered during the course of the teaching anyway. In the essay question, the top level of the generic mark scheme is removed for the AS when compared to the A Level to reflect the lower demand. The content for this unit is the same between AS and A Level.

Further guidance on the interpretations element of AS unit 2 is available in a teacher's guide.

The table below highlights the different question styles between the two papers:

|               | AS Level questions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | A Level questions                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Unit 1</b> | <p>1. Use your knowledge of XXXXXXXXXXXX to assess how useful Source XXXXXX is as evidence for the XXXXXXXX. <b>[10]</b></p> <p>2. Using these three sources in their historical context, assess how far they support the view that XXXXX <b>[20]</b></p> <p>Followed by essay</p>                                                                                                                                                       | <p>1. Using these four sources in their historical context, assess how far they support the view that XXXXX <b>[30]</b></p> <p>Followed by essay</p>                                        |
| <b>Unit 2</b> | <p>1. Read the interpretation and then answer the question that follows: '[Mussolini's] pursuit of personal power took priority over the desire to 'Fascisticise' Italy and the Italian institutions.' From: M.Robson, Italy: Liberalism and Fascism 1870–1945. Evaluate the strengths and limitations of this interpretation, making reference to other interpretations that you have studied. <b>[20]</b></p> <p>Followed by essay</p> | <p>1. (a) Which had the greater importance for XXXXX?<br/>(i) XXXXX<br/>(ii) XXXXX</p> <p>Explain your answer with reference to both (i) and (ii). <b>[10]</b></p> <p>Followed by essay</p> |



# SUPPORTING YOU ALL THE WAY

We recognise that the introduction of a new specification can bring challenges for implementation and teaching. Our aim is to help you at every stage and we're working hard to provide a practical package of support in close consultation with teachers and other experts so we can help you to make the changes. For a start, we'll provide a range of high-quality creative resources. Tailored to the needs of each subject, their focus is on supporting creative teaching approaches and progression for all students. We see our resources as a body of knowledge that will grow throughout the lifetime of the specifications. They are built on the best practice we've identified from our ongoing discussions with the teaching community.

We are also developing exciting new digital tools to help you explore and use our resources. The Scheme of Work Builder will allow you to construct personalised schemes of work and you'll be able to add in the specification content, our wide range of resources and teaching suggestions and add your own content and materials. Please visit our website at [ocr.org.uk/reformresources](http://ocr.org.uk/reformresources) for details of the new tools we are developing and to take a look at the types of resources on offer.

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We're working with a number of leading publishers who are producing resources for the new AS and A Level specifications for 2015. We're working together to make sure that the resources embed the fundamental content of each specification, while delivering the breadth and depth needed to succeed at A Level and beyond.

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