

Switching to OCR from AQA

Introduction

Like many teachers, we are really excited about our History qualification. Whether taking on the AS or the full A Level, this fantastic course is a great qualification for those with an interest in the subject. Why have so many departments chosen OCR for A Level History?

- The specification has a very clear structure, maximising flexibility – and making it straightforward to switch your current course to OCR's
- Each option is examined on its own discrete question paper – resulting in a robust and transparent standardisation, marking, and awarding process
- Online marking of discrete topics has enabled us to recruit teachers of those topics as examiners, and allows a comprehensive range of statistical checks on marking alongside qualitative checks – as well as ensuring full security of confidential material
- Assessment objectives are clearly allocated to different papers, resulting in straightforward and clear examination questions
- A comprehensive range of options is available, with few restrictions of combination, making switching easy!
- Free choice of coursework: students can investigate a topic of their own choosing – excellent, genuine preparation for Higher Education, and inspiring for students.

Our offer

- Our History team, Grant, Mike, Asher and Zoe are passionate about History and education. With many years' teaching, Head of Department and assessment experience, they are fully committed to supporting centres' delivery of History.
- We have produced a wide range of [support materials](#), from teacher guides to delivery guides, lesson elements, practical activities, candidate exemplars and more.
- Join our conversation on the [OCR Community](#), where you'll find individual threads for the particular topics you teach, and [@OCR_History](#) to talk about and share good practice.

Teacher tweet: [@OCR_History](#) been really impressed with your GCSE support, so after 1 year of a-level with aqa, am also switching the a-level.



Key differences

OCR History A	AQA History
<p>A diverse course that you have maximum control over, allowing you to maximise your department's expertise and resources, and ensuring that your students remain engaged throughout.</p>	<p>The same two topics are followed through from the first to the second year of A Level.</p>
<p>Units 1 and 2 can be effectively finished by the end of year 12, allowing sufficient time in year 13 for completion of coursework alongside unit 3.</p>	<p>Breadth and Depth Studies continue into year 13, with the same number of key issues as covered in year 12, with coursework on a different topic to be produced alongside that.</p>
<p>Coursework is simply a 'university-style' essay answering a question of their own choosing. So, they can pick up on something that interested them elsewhere in the course, investigate something entirely new of their own personal interest, or you can teach a fourth topic and have a range of questions arising from that.</p>	<p>Coursework has to be in the context of 100 years on a topic around which there are different interpretations.</p>



Content

Because the OCR History A specification has more options and greater flexibility, much of the content will be very familiar. After looking at the content options in the table below, contact our History team to discuss the implications of changing to the OCR equivalents.

AQA Component 1	OCR History A
1A The Age of the Crusades c1071-1204	Y203 The Crusades and the Crusader States 1095-1192
1B Spain in the Age of Discovery, 1469–1598	Y205 Spain 1469-1556
1C The Tudors: England, 1485–1603	Y106 England 1485-1558: The Early Tudors
1D Stuart Britain and the Crisis of Monarchy, 1603–1702	Y108 The Early Stuarts and the Origins of the Civil War
1E Russia in the Age of Absolutism and Enlightenment, 1682–1796	Y210 Russia 1645-1741
1F Industrialisation and the people: Britain, c1783–1885	Y110 From Pitt to Peel: Britain 1783-1853
1G Challenge and transformation: Britain, c1851–1964	Y113 Liberals, Conservatives and the Rise of Labour 1846-1918
1H Tsarist and Communist Russia, 1855–1964	Y318 Russia and its Rulers 1855-1964
1J The British Empire, c1857–1967	Y320 From Colonialism to Independence: The British Empire 1857-1965
1K The making of a Superpower: USA, 1865–1975	Y319 Civil Rights in the USA 1865-1992
1L The quest for political stability: Germany, 1871–1991	Coursework



AQA Component 2	OCR History A
2A Royal Authority and the Angevin Kings, 1154–1216	Coursework (England 1199-1272)
2B The Wars of the Roses, 1450–1499	Y105 England 1445-1509
2C The Reformation in Europe, c1500–1564	Y207 The German Reformation and the rule of Charles V
2D Religious conflict and the Church in England, c1529–c1570	Y107 England 1547-1603 The Later Tudors
2E The English Revolution, 1625–1660	Y108 The Early Stuarts and the Origins of the Civil War 1603-1660
2F The Sun King: Louis XIV, France and Europe, 1643–1715	Y313 The Ascendancy of France 1610-1715
2G The Birth of the USA, 1760–1801	Y212 The American Revolution 1740-1796
2H France in Revolution, 1774–1815	Y213 The French Revolution and the rule of Napoleon 1774-1815
2J America: A Nation Divided, c1845–1877	Y216 The USA in the 19 th century: westward expansion and civil war 1803-c1890
2K International Relations and Global Conflict, c1890–1941	Y218 International Relations 1890-1941
2L Italy and Fascism, c1900–1945	Y220 Italy 1896-1943
2M Wars and Welfare: Britain in Transition, 1906–1957	Y112 Britain 1900-1951



2N Revolution and dictatorship: Russia, 1917–1953	Y219 Russia 1894-1941
2O Democracy and Nazism: Germany, 1918–1945	Y221 Democracy and Dictatorships in Germany 1919-1963
2P The Transformation of China, 1936–1997	Y317 China and its Rulers 1839-1989
2Q The American Dream: reality and illusion, 1945–1980	Coursework
2R The Cold War, c1945–1991	Y223 The Cold War in Europe 1941-1995
2S The Making of Modern Britain, 1951–2007	Y113 Britain 1930-1997
2T The Crisis of Communism: The USSR and the Soviet Empire, 1953–2000	Y223 The Cold War in Europe 1941-1995



Assessment

OCR A Level History	AQA A Level
<p>Three examinations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unit 1: 1.5 hours • Unit 2: 1 hour • Unit 3: 2.5 hours <p>+ coursework (3-4000 word essay)</p> <p>Separating out the content into 3 shorter examinations allows for a clear focus for each, and less pressure on each individual paper</p>	<p>Two examinations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Component 1: 2.5 hours • Component 2: 2.5 hours <p>+ coursework (3-3500 word investigation)</p>
<p>Unit 1: British Enquiry and Period Study</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A source question on a clearly defined and unchanging area of the specification (30 marks) • A choice of essay questions on different issues in the specification (20 marks) 	<p>Component 1: Breadth Study</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section A – one compulsory question linked to historical interpretations (30 marks) • Section B – two from three essays (2 x 25 marks)
<p>Unit 2: Non-British Period Study</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choice of questions • Part (a) a unique shorter comparison of factor question (10 marks) • Part (b) an essay with exactly the same skills and mark scheme as Unit 1 (20 marks) 	
<p>Unit 3: Thematic Study and Historical Interpretations Depth Study</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A passages question requiring evaluation of arguments on one of three specified depth studies, but 	<p>Component 2: Depth Study</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section A – one compulsory question linked to primary sources or sources contemporary to the period (30 marks)



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<p>applying own knowledge (30 marks)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 thematic essays covering the whole period from a choice of 3 (2x25 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Section B – two from three essays (2 x 25 marks)



Want to switch to OCR?

If you're an OCR-approved centre, all you need to do is download the specification and start teaching.

Your exams officer can complete an [intention to teach form](#) which enables us to provide appropriate support to them. When you're ready to enter your students, you just need to speak to your exams officer to:

1. Make estimated entries by 10 October so we can send you any early release materials, prepare the question papers and ensure we've got enough examiners.
2. Make final entries by 21 February

If you are not already an OCR-approved centre, please refer your exams officer to the [centre approval section](#) of our admin guide.

Next steps

1. Familiarise yourself with the specification, sample assessment materials and teaching resources on the [History GCE](#) qualification page of the OCR website.
2. Use our unique online [A Level Specification Creator tool](#) to check that your chosen combination of topics constitutes a valid course (i.e. that you've met the 200 year rule). Specification Creator also allows you to sign up for topic specific updates on resources for the history that you've chosen to teach.
3. Browse the [online delivery guides](#) for teaching ideas and use [the Scheme of Work builder](#) to create your personal scheme of work.
4. [Get a login](#) for our secure extranet, [Interchange](#) – allows you to access the latest past/practice papers and use our results analysis service, [Active Results](#).
5. Sign up to receive [subject updates](#) by email.
6. Sign up to attend a [training event](#) or take part in webinars on specific topics running throughout the year and/or our Q&A webinar sessions every half term.
7. Attend one of our free [teacher network events](#).

