



# Advanced Higher History — draft Course Rationale and Summary



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# Course rationale

## Background

All new and revised National Courses reflect Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles. They offer flexibility, provide more time for learning, more focus on skills and applying learning, and scope for personalisation and choice.

In this Course, and its component Units, there will be an emphasis on skills development and the application of those skills. Assessment approaches will be proportionate, fit for purpose and will promote best practice, enabling learners to achieve the highest standards they can.

This Course provides learners with opportunities to continue to acquire and develop the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities as well as skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

All Courses provide opportunities for learners to develop breadth, challenge and application, but the focus and balance of the assessment will be appropriate for the subject area.

## **Relationship between the Course and Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles**

From the perspective of time and embracing both continuity and change, History draws on other disciplines, subjects and modes of thought to provide an explanation of events in the past and of the world at the present.

In this Course, as at other levels of History, learners develop their understanding of the world by learning about other people and their values, in different times, places and circumstances. This will encourage learners to develop important attitudes, including: a respect for the values, beliefs and cultures of others; openness to new thinking and ideas; a commitment to democratic values; and a sense of responsibility and global citizenship.

This Course contributes to learners' understanding of the society in which they live and work by helping them to develop an appreciation and understanding of the forces which have shaped the world today. The acquisition of discipline-based knowledge and understanding of historical events is central to helping learners function as effective contributors to society and responsible citizens within that society, as well as giving them more individual confidence in their learning and working lives.

This Course encourages learners to develop the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities in many respects. For example, learners' horizons are extended and they are challenged to look at the world in new ways. Their confidence grows as they begin to understand more about their sense of identity and place in the contemporary world.

At Advanced Higher the focus on the detailed study of a specific theme allows learners to explore sophisticated issues and concepts, to engage with a wide range of source material and to review a wide range of interpretations of history. This depth of study affords them a unique opportunity of intellectual engagement.

Through the application of skills and content of this Course, learners will progressively develop literacy skills by reading historical texts, and writing accounts of historical themes and events. Through the intellectual engagement with varying historical interpretations and in contributing to group work, learners will develop skills of debate and values of tolerance of the views of others. They will learn to develop and sustain a complex argument based on, and consistent with, the available evidence.

The critical thinking activities in this Course provide learners with important transferable skills for their life, work and further study. Through the study of primary and secondary sources, integral to the research required to produce a substantial piece of work of academic merit, learners are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning as well as becoming responsible citizens.

## **Purpose and aims of the Course**

The purpose of the Advanced Higher History Course is to allow learners to acquire depth in their knowledge and understanding of historical themes and to develop further the skills of analysing issues, developments and events, drawing conclusions, and evaluating sources.

Through the detailed study of a chosen field, learners are able to engage in the issues which arise from significant historical events and developments. The depth of study enables them to engage fully in historical debate and thereby to develop a deeper appreciation of the forces which have shaped their world.

These aims will be achieved through the study in depth of a chosen context. Learners will study one Field of Study from a specified choice. The Course will also provide the opportunity to integrate these skills in an extended piece of individual research.

The approach developed and the understanding gained can be applied to other historical and contemporary settings and issues.

The aims of this Course are to develop and enhance important skills. These skills include:

- ◆ demonstrating a rigour and thoroughness of thought in the application of knowledge and understanding, acquired through reading and selecting relevant evidence, to particular historical issues
- ◆ critically analysing existing historical research, including identifying important lines of argument and evaluating schools of thought on particular historical issues
- ◆ evaluating primary and other evidence with regard to its authorship and purpose, coherence, standpoint and completeness
- ◆ synthesising primary sources and perspectives from historical research in organising, analysing and sustaining lines of argument which reflect the complexity of the issues they address
- ◆ adopting a relevant and structured approach to the research of a historical issue presenting conclusions in a clear and balanced way, while reflecting the complexity of the issue under consideration and the limitations of the available evidence

Learners will be required to handle detailed information in order to analyse events and their relationships thoroughly; to use this analysis to address complex historical issues, including consideration of alternative interpretations; and to draw a series of judgments together by structured, reasoned argument reaching well-supported conclusions. Learners will also be expected to interpret a range of complex primary and secondary sources and use them to analyse historical issues. They should also develop awareness of the interrelationship of the various aspects of the Field of Study.

In addition, learners will be required to undertake the planning, research, preparation and presentation of a dissertation on a defined historical issue relating to their Field of Study.

## **Information about typical learners who might do the Course**

History Courses are relevant for a wide range of learners. This Course is appropriate for those who wish to specialise in a historical theme and take their research skills forward to an academic level.

The specific historical research and presentation skills developed by undertaking this Course and the general approach to independent work, self-motivation and individual initiative will stand learners in good stead as they progress to higher education and the world of work.

Entry to this Course is at the discretion of the centre. However, it may be beneficial for a learner to have the skills and knowledge required by Higher History, relevant component Units, another social subject at Higher or equivalent qualifications.

All Courses in this suite will take account of the needs of all learners and provide sufficient flexibility to enable learners to achieve in different ways and at different paces.

Through the successful completion of this Course, important transferable skills are developed. These skills include: the ability to carry out independent research; applying knowledge and understanding to complex historical issues, analysing existing research on historical themes and events to develop an independence of thought while taking account of the opinions of others; synthesising information from a wide range of sources to produce detailed and reasoned lines of argument; evaluating historical sources with reference to their content, context and usefulness; presenting findings in a structured manner; and communicating balanced conclusions supported by evidence.

This Course is recognised as an entry qualification to employment, training, and higher and further education. This Course also provides preparation for a diverse range of occupations and careers.

The ability to develop and sustain a coherent argument based on evidence is particularly apt in a number of professions and degree programmes. This Course can lead to degree programmes in law, humanities, social science, business and medicine. Potential careers include politics, the civil service and management in education, business, commerce and industry.

History Units and Courses are offered from SCQF level 3 to SCQF level 7. Vertical progression is possible through the levels of History qualifications and lateral progression is possible to other qualifications in the social studies suite of Courses.

# Course summary

**Course title: Advanced Higher History**

**SCQF level 7 (32 SCQF credit points)**

## Course outline

### Mandatory Units

<b>Historical Study (Advanced Higher)</b>	<b>16 SCQF credit points</b>
<b>History: Independent Research (Advanced Higher)</b>	<b>8 SCQF credit points</b>

<b>Course assessment</b>	<b>8 SCQF credit points</b>
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This Course includes eight SCQF credit points to allow additional time for preparation for Course assessment. The Course assessment covers the added value of the Course. Further information on the Course assessment is provided in the Assessment section.

# Course structure and conditions of award

## Course structure

The Course consists of two Units: *Historical Study* (Advanced Higher), and *History: Independent Research* (Advanced Higher). Within each Unit there are eleven Fields of Study. In each Field of Study, learners should be aware of historical interpretations and issues.

This Course develops a range of cognitive skills. It encourages active learning in the process of developing an understanding of people and society in the past. Learners need to acquire and apply relevant knowledge and learn to apply skills of investigating, analysing and evaluating sources in order to understand and explain important historical themes.

By undertaking this Course, learners will develop a wide range of important and transferable skills, including: the ability to carry out independent research and investigating historical themes and events; synthesising information from a wide range of sources to produce detailed and reasoned lines of argument; evaluating historical sources; analysing historical themes and events; and communicating balanced conclusions supported by evidence.

The skills listed above will be developed through the detailed study of one historical field in the following Units.

Units are statements of standards for assessment and not programmes of learning and teaching. They can be delivered in a number of ways.

### **Historical Study (Advanced Higher)**

In this Unit, learners will undertake a detailed study of a single historical period. Through this study they will develop their ability to evaluate a wide range of historical sources and apply these to address the historical debates within their field of study. In doing this they will engage with the views of a range of historians, analyse the issues and come to a well- reasoned conclusion.

Learners study one Field of Study from a choice of specified fields.

### **History: Independent Research (Advanced Higher)**

In this Unit learners will develop a range of investigating skills while undertaking independent study of a complex historical issue drawn from a Field of Study in the *Historical Study* (Advanced Higher) Unit. Learners will develop a range of skills such as planning a programme of research; researching, collecting and recording information; evaluating, analysing, and synthesising evidence; organising, and presenting their findings using academic conventions.

## **Conditions of award**

To gain the award of the Course, the learner must pass all of the Units as well as the Course assessment. The required Units are shown in the Course outline section. Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

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# Assessment

Information about assessment for the Course is included in the Course Assessment Specification which provides full details including advice on how a learner's overall attainment for the Course is determined.

## Unit assessment

All Units are internally assessed against the requirements shown in the Unit Specification.

They should be assessed on a Unit-by-Unit basis or by combined assessment.

They will be assessed on a pass/fail basis within centres. SQA will provide rigorous external quality assurance, including external verification, to ensure assessment judgments are consistent and meet national standards.

Exemplification of possible assessment approaches for these Units is provided in the *National Assessment Resource*.

## Course assessment

Courses from National 4 to Advanced Higher include assessment of [added value](#)<sup>1</sup>. At National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher, the added value will be assessed in the Course assessment. The added value for the Course must address the key purposes and aims of the Course as defined in the Course Rationale. It will do this by addressing one or more of breadth, challenge or application.

In the Advanced Higher History Course, added value will focus on:

- ◆ challenge
- ◆ application

Learners will draw on, extend and apply the knowledge and skills they have learned during the Course. This will be assessed by a [question paper](#)<sup>2</sup> and a [project](#)<sup>3</sup>. The question paper will require demonstration of depth of knowledge and understanding in addressing issues that may overlap a number of content areas within the Field of Study. At this level, the issues are complex, as is reflected in the degree of historical debate which exists on them, and which must be taken into account when learners formulate responses. Source materials will reflect the greater degree of challenge at this level and require the skills and knowledge and understanding accumulated from across the Course to be applied accordingly. The project will require learners to extend and apply their skills,

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<sup>1</sup> Definitions can be found here: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html)

<sup>2</sup> See link above for definition.

<sup>3</sup> See link above for definition.

*successful learner, confident individual, responsible citizen, effective contributor*

knowledge and understanding and will be sufficiently open and flexible to allow for personalisation and choice.

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