



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

This Course builds upon the principles and practices for the social studies curriculum area¹.

In History, learners develop their understanding of the world by learning about other people and their values, in different times, places and circumstances.

This Course will encourage learners to develop important attitudes, including: an open mind and respect for the values, beliefs and cultures of others; an openness to new thinking and ideas; and a sense of responsibility and global citizenship.

History contributes to learners' understanding of the society in which they live through an appreciation and understanding of the forces which have shaped the world today. This sense of heritage and historical understanding will in turn assist them in functioning 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.

History 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. The critical insights offered by the Course can help learners to become responsible citizens as they build up a framework of historical knowledge and understanding.

The investigative, creative and critical thinking activities in this Course give learners important experience in contributing to group work and also working on their own. Learners will acquire attributes which will be important for their life and work.

A coherent and balanced understanding of Scottish, British, European and World history will develop a sense of responsible citizenship. Through its focus on critical thinking, learners will develop skills in employability and enterprise. Learners will progressively develop skills in literacy, as well as thinking skills, through an emphasis on the evaluation of sources. Through the skills and content of this Course, learners will be encouraged to reflect upon their own health and wellbeing.

¹ Social studies principles and practice paper

www.ltscotland.org.uk/learningteachingandassessment/curriculumareas/socialstudies/principlesandpractice/index.asp

Purpose and aims of the Course

History opens up the world of the past for learners.

The purpose of the Higher History Course is to provide learners with insights into their own lives and the society in which they live. By examining the past, they discover their heritage as members of a community, a country and a wider world and place themselves and their society in the context of the past. This purpose will be achieved through successful study of the three Units of the Course which will study Scottish, British, European and World contexts in a variety of possible time periods, including Medieval, Early Modern and Later Modern.

History uniquely provides opportunities for learners to study past societies, the changes they have undergone, and the ways in which they have embraced or sometimes resisted change. Through such studies, History provides learners with both a perspective on, and an understanding of, the forces which have shaped their own society and societies in other countries.

The main aims of this Course are to:

- ◆ develop learners' conceptual understanding and foster their ability to think independently in order to make informed judgements
- ◆ enable learners to acquire breadth and depth in the knowledge and understanding of historical themes
- ◆ encourage learners to apply a historical perspective in order to more fully understand modern society
- ◆ analyse various interpretations of historical sources, drawing balanced conclusions
- ◆ encourage learners to debate issues and, on the basis of evidence, form reasoned views, critically evaluating those of others

The History Course contributes to general education and the wider curriculum. It will help develop informed and active citizens by helping learners develop a greater understanding of political and social institutions and processes.

Learners will develop skills which they will use in everyday life to enable them to participate in society.

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 achieve a deeper understanding of history or are seeking to progress and specialise in further historical study.

Entry to this Course is at the discretion of the centre. However, it may be beneficial for learners to have the skills and knowledge required by one or more of the following:

- ◆ History (National 5) or relevant component Units or another social subject
- ◆ 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 a different pace.

Through the successful completion of the History Course, important skills for learning, life and work are developed. These skills include: researching and investigating historical themes and events; synthesising information from a range of sources to produce detailed and reasoned lines of argument; evaluating historical sources with reference to their content, context and usefulness; and communicating balanced conclusions supported by evidence.

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.

This Course provides access qualifications for study in further education and for entry into a range of careers and employment.

Course summary

Course title: Higher History

SCQF level 6 (24 SCQF credit points)

Course outline

Mandatory Units

Historical Study: Scottish (Higher)	(6 SCQF credit points)
Historical Study: British (Higher)	(6 SCQF credit points)
Historical Study: European and World (Higher)	(6 SCQF credit points)

Course assessment

(6 SCQF credit points)

This Course includes six SCQF credit points for 40 additional programmed hours to allow 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

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 to apply skills of investigating, analysing and evaluating sources in order to understand and explain political, religious, social and cultural issues.

This Course has three mandatory Units. Within each Unit there is a considerable degree of flexibility in contexts and themes which can be studied to allow personalisation and choice.

By undertaking this Course, learners will develop a wide range of important and transferable skills, including researching and investigating historical themes and events; synthesising information from a range of sources to produce detailed and reasoned lines of argument; evaluating historical sources with reference to their content, context and usefulness; analysing historical themes and events; and communicating balanced conclusions supported by evidence.

The skills listed above will be developed and applied over a range of contexts in the following Units. Each Unit also offers opportunities to focus on particular skills.

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

Historical Study: Scottish (Higher)

In this Unit, learners will evaluate a range of primary and secondary sources in terms of content, context and usefulness. Learners will be required to study one of a number of specified contexts. Through the context chosen, important themes of Scottish history may be studied from the Medieval, Early Modern or Later Modern period. Learners will develop knowledge and understanding of an important area of historical study.

Historical Study: British (Higher)

In this Unit, learners will explain and analyse historical themes and events, placing sources within their historical context. Learners will be required to study one of a number of specified contexts. Through the context chosen, important themes of British history may be studied from the Medieval, Early Modern or Later Modern period. Learners will develop knowledge and understanding of an important area of historical study.

Historical Study: European and World (Higher)

In this Unit, learners will evaluate historical developments, structuring information and drawing balanced conclusions. Learners will be required to study one of a number of specified contexts. Through the context chosen, important themes of European and World history may be studied from the Medieval, Early Modern or Later Modern period. Learners will develop knowledge and understanding of an important area of historical study.

successful learner, confident individual, responsible citizen, effective contributor

To gain the award of the Course, the learner must pass all 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 standards for the Course will be included in the *Course Assessment Specification* which will provide full details including advice on how a learner's overall attainment for the Course will be determined.

Unit assessment

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

They will be assessed pass/fail within centres.

SQA will provide rigorous external quality assurance, including external verification, to ensure assessment judgements are consistent and meet national standards.

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

Course assessment

Courses from National 4 to Advanced Higher include assessment of [added value](#)². 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 and application.

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

- ◆ breadth
- ◆ 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](#)³ and a [project](#)⁴. The question paper will require demonstration of a breadth of knowledge, understanding and skills accumulated from across the Course. The project will require learners to extend and apply their knowledge and skills and will be sufficiently open and flexible to allow for personalisation and choice.

² Definitions can be found here: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html

³ See link above for definition.

⁴ See link above for definition.