



National 4
Course
Specification



National 4 History Course Specification (C737 74)

Valid from August 2024

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Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this Course Specification for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

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Course outline

Course title: National 4 History

SCQF: level 4 (24 SCQF credit points)

Course code: C737 74

Mandatory Units

H205 74	Historical Study: Scottish (National 4)	6 SCQF credit points
H20C 74	Historical Study: British (National 4)	6 SCQF credit points
H20D74	Historical Study: European and World (National 4)	6 SCQF credit points

Added Value Unit

H20E 74 **History Assignment (National 4)** **6 SCQF credit points**

This Course includes six SCQF credit points for the assessment of added value in the Added Value Unit. Further information on this Unit is provided in the Assessment section.

Recommended entry

Entry to this Course is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills and knowledge required by the following or equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

- ◆ National 3 History Course or relevant component Units

In terms of prior learning and experience, relevant experiences and outcomes may also provide an appropriate basis for doing this Course. Further information on relevant experiences and outcomes is given in the *Course Support Notes*.

Progression

This Course or its Units may provide progression to:

- ◆ National 5 History Course or its Units
- ◆ further study, employment and/or training

Further details are provided in the Rationale section.

Equality and inclusion

This Course Specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence. For further information, please refer to the *Course Support Notes*.

Rationale

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 social studies and will be developed primarily, although not exclusively, from the 'people, past events and societies' organiser within the experiences and outcomes in the social studies curriculum area.

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; openness to new thinking and ideas, 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 a map of the past and 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, 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. Learners will build up a framework of historical knowledge and understanding which can help them develop a sense of responsible citizenship.

The investigative 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.

Through the skills and content of this Course, learners will progressively develop literacy skills; reading historical texts, writing accounts of historical themes and events, as well as contributing to group work.

Through its focus on sources, learners will develop a sense of responsibility and citizenship.

Purpose and aims of the Course

The purpose of the Course is to open up the world of the past for learners. History provides learners with insights into their own lives and of the society and the wider world in which they live.

By examining the past, learners can better understand their own communities, their country and the wider world. Through an understanding of the concept of continuity, they can better appreciate change and its significance, both in their own times and in the past.

Learners will acquire breadth and depth in their knowledge and understanding of the past through the study of Scottish, British, European and world contexts in a variety of time periods. Options cover topics from the Medieval, Early Modern and Later Modern periods and include elements of political, social, economic and cultural history. The approach developed and the understanding gained can be applied to other historical settings and issues.

The main aims of the Course are to develop:

- ◆ a conceptual understanding of the past
- ◆ a range of skills including the ability to apply a straightforward historical perspective and comment on historical sources in a range of contexts
- ◆ a straightforward knowledge and understanding of the factors contributing to, and the impact of, historical events
- ◆ the skills of investigating historical events and forming views
- ◆ the skills of explaining historical events, and drawing straightforward conclusions

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 develop an understanding of history or who 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 the learner to have the skills and knowledge from the relevant experiences and outcomes from the broad general education and equivalent qualifications.

Through the successful completion of this Course, important skills for learning, life and work are developed. These skills include: researching, understanding and using a limited range of straightforward sources of information; explaining information about important historical themes and events; and communicating, by a variety of means, conclusions based on evidence.

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.

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.

The National 4 History Course provides an entry qualification for further study, employment and training. This Course is a preparation for a diverse range of occupations and careers.

Course structure and conditions of award

Course structure

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 will acquire and apply relevant knowledge and learn to apply skills of investigating, analysing and evaluating sources in order to understand and explain important historical events and themes.

This Course has four mandatory Units, including the Added Value Unit. 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 transferable skills, including: researching, understanding and using a limited range of sources of information; explaining information about historical themes/events; and communicating, by a variety of means, conclusions based on evidence.

The skills listed above will be developed and applied over a range of historical contexts. Each Unit also offers opportunities for learners 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 number of ways.

Historical Study: Scottish (National 4)

In this Unit, learners will develop techniques to comment on historical sources. Events and themes of Scottish history may be studied from the Medieval, Early Modern or Later Modern period. Learners will develop knowledge and understanding of an area of historical study.

Historical Study: British (National 4)

In this Unit, learners will develop techniques to comment on the impact of a historical development. Events and themes of British history may be studied from the Medieval, Early Modern or Later Modern period. Learners will develop knowledge and understanding of an area of historical study.

Historical Study: European and World (National 4)

In this Unit, learners will develop techniques to comment on the factors contributing towards a historical development. Events and 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 area of historical study.

Added Value Unit: History Assignment (National 4)

In this Unit, learners will exercise choice in selecting a topic for personal study drawn from Scottish, British or European and world contexts. They will research their chosen topic and communicate their findings. Through this activity, they will have opportunities to demonstrate greater depth or extension of historical knowledge, understanding and skills as they draw on and apply the knowledge, understanding and skills acquired in the other Units of the Course.

Conditions of award

To achieve the National 4 History Course, learners must pass all of the required Units, including the Added Value Unit. The required Units are shown in the Course outline section.

National 4 Courses are not graded.

Skills, knowledge and understanding

Full skills, knowledge and understanding for the Course will be given in the *Added Value Unit Specification*. A broad overview of the mandatory subject skills, knowledge and understanding that will be assessed in the Course is given in this section.

This covers:

- ◆ developing and applying straightforward skills, knowledge and understanding in contexts from Scottish, British or European/world history
- ◆ commenting on the origin and content of historical sources in a straightforward way
- ◆ commenting on the impact of historical developments in a straightforward way, presenting information in an organised manner
- ◆ commenting on the factors contributing towards historical developments, drawing straightforward conclusions
- ◆ with some guidance, researching and using information collected from a range of historical sources and presenting findings
- ◆ developing a straightforward factual knowledge and understanding of historical themes and events in Scottish, British, European and world contexts

Skills, knowledge and understanding to be included in the Course will be appropriate to the SCQF level of the Course. The SCQF level descriptors give further information on characteristics and expected performance at each SCQF level (www.sqa.org.uk/scqf).

Assessment

Information about assessment for the Course is 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 the Unit Specification.

They can be assessed on an individual Unit basis or by using other approaches which combine the assessment for more than one Unit.

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

The assessment of the Units in this Course will be as follows:

Historical Study: Scottish History (National 4)

The learner will be required to provide evidence of:

- ◆ ability to comment in a straightforward way on historical sources, taking into account their origin and content
- ◆ descriptions and explanations demonstrating a straightforward factual knowledge and understanding of themes and events within an area of Scottish history

Historical Study: British History (National 4)

The learner will be required to provide evidence of:

- ◆ ability to comment on the impact of a historical development in a straightforward way and present information in an organised manner
- ◆ straightforward descriptions and explanations demonstrating a factual knowledge and understanding of themes and events within an area of British history

Historical Study: European and World (National 4)

The learner will be required to provide evidence of:

- ◆ ability to comment on the factors contributing towards a historical development in a straightforward way, drawing a straightforward conclusion
- ◆ descriptions and explanations demonstrating a straightforward factual knowledge and understanding of themes and events within an area of European and world history

Added Value Unit

Courses from National 4 to Advanced Higher include assessment of [added value](#)¹. At National 4, added value will be assessed in an Added Value Unit. The Added Value Unit will 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 National 4 History Course, the Added Value Unit will focus on:

- ◆ challenge
- ◆ application

The learner will draw on, extend and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding they have acquired during the Course. This will be assessed by an [assignment](#)² in which learners will be required to extend and apply their knowledge and skills and will be sufficiently open and flexible to allow for personalisation and choice.

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

¹ Definitions can be found here: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/58409.html

² As footnote above

Development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

It is expected that learners will also develop broad, generic skills through this Course. The skills that learners are expected to improve on and develop through the Course are based on SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work* and drawn from the main skills areas listed below. These must be built into the Course where there are appropriate opportunities.

1 Literacy

1.1 Reading

4 Employability, enterprise and citizenship

4.6 Citizenship

5 Thinking skills

5.2 Understanding

5.3 Applying

Amplification of these is given in SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*. The level of these skills will be appropriate to the level of the Course. Further information on building in skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work for the Course is given in the *Course Support Notes*.

Administrative information

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History of changes to National Course Specification

Version	Description of change	Date
2.0	In the 'Relationship between the Course and Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles' section, 'sense of responsible' has been corrected to read 'sense of responsibility'.	May 2024

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