

Teacher Resource Bank

GCE History

Key Features



INTRODUCTION

The new GCE History Specification offers current AQA centres an opportunity for continuity as many of the options across Units 1, 2 and 3 will be familiar and allow teachers to use their existing resources.

AQA has also introduced new options such as HIS2O (on China and Mao) and HIS2R (on 1960s Britain) to extend centre choice.

The greater flexibility of the revised specification will also allow centres new to AQA to devise interesting courses of study which will appeal to their candidates and teachers.

KEY FEATURES

1. Flexible assessment model

The QCA History Subject Criteria state that a minimum of 25% of the full A-Level course must be British history and any one of the British options in Units 1–3 satisfies this requirement. AQA recognises that whilst many centres will choose to combine a British unit with a non-British unit at AS, this will not be appropriate for all centres. Consequently, unlike OCR and Edexcel, the AQA specification does not require the study of British history at AS: centres can construct a course based on European/foreign history for the AS part of the qualification. The specification has been designed with maximum flexibility in mind.

Question papers are standardised, straightforward and rubrics are easy to understand. All three examined units offer a choice of question. Unit 4 (Historical Enquiry) requires a single piece of coursework and no record of procedure; the non-prescriptive open nature of this unit allows teachers to teach almost any historical topic, meaning that use can be made of existing resources and expertise.

The number of prohibited combinations has been restricted to ensure maximum flexibility. Other than the requirement that at least 25% of the full A-Level course must be on British history there are only two prohibited combinations, required owing to an overlap of content:

- HIS1N (Totalitarian Ideology) cannot be combined with HIS2K (Mussolini's Italy), HIS2L (Stalin's USSR), HIS2M (Nazi Germany) or HIS2N (Anti-Semitism)
- HIS1L (Britain, 1906–1951) cannot be combined with HIS3J (Britain, 1918–1964)

2. Excellent support

AQA will continue to offer its centres exceptional standards of support and customer service. In addition to Teacher Resource Bank materials such as *Resources Lists*, *Specimen Papers* and *Schemes of Work*, AQA provides:

- A dedicated History Support Team available throughout the day to answer your queries on the specification
- A team of coursework advisers to assist with the construction of courses and to provide feedback on Historical Enquiry titles
- Option-specific support meetings (starting in 2008)

AQA also has an exclusive partnership with the publisher Nelson Thornes. This partnership will produce option-specific textbooks and related online support.

(see http://www.nelsonthornes.com/aqagce/history_resource.htm for more information)

3. Historical Enquiry (Unit 4)

AQA has recognised the challenges to centres presented by coursework being made compulsory in GCE History. Accordingly the coursework unit has been designed to enable a variety of different approaches:

- Centres can select a course of study from one of the exemplar topic outlines provided by AQA (available on the AQA website)
- Centres can devise their own courses of study and have these validated by AQA. This will allow centres to continue to offer topics which have proved popular in the past with their candidates and to make use of existing resources
- Individual students can choose their own courses of study under the supervision of a teacher.

The first two options allow for centres to construct a 'taught course', allowing the traditional two teacher approach to GCE History to be retained. The third option allows centres to continue with existing practices currently employed in the completion of the Personal Study.

For further information see the Teacher Resource Bank item *Guidance on the Historical Enquiry (Unit 4)*.