

HSC History Extension

The purpose of HSC History Extension is to enable students to build on the outcomes of the Stage 6 Ancient History and Modern History courses in relation to historiography and historical enquiry and communication. The course further develops students' understanding of how historians work. The focus of the course is not on content alone, although an understanding of content is important. Rather than simply extending students' knowledge of a particular period or event in history, the course is aimed at using specific historical investigations to reflect on the nature of history and how and why approaches and interpretations change over time.

HSC History Extension provides students with the opportunity to gain greater knowledge and understanding of the way history is written. They do this by reviewing the kinds of history that have been written and the context in which history is constructed over time in order to reflect on some of the problems associated with the writing of history. Students explore these issues through readings selected from the works of various writers and historians from ancient times to the present day and a case study on an area of debate. Through the case study, students consider how historians use sources as evidence to establish their interpretations of a person or issue. Finally, students have the opportunity to build on the skills of historical enquiry and to apply them by designing and conducting their own historical investigation.

Why take HSC History Extension?

Students may choose to undertake HSC History Extension for several reasons. Many students find that history is a living and changing construct, a fascinating revelation, an idea which they are happy to pursue in greater depth than allowed for in the other Stage 6 History courses. Students also gain a great deal of intellectual challenge and enjoyment from undertaking a historical investigation into an area that they have chosen and developed themselves. They are able to concentrate on an issue of personal interest to them, finding satisfaction and a sense of empowerment in the development and presentation of an extended piece of writing of their own.

HSC History Extension is designed to enhance the development of critical and reflective thinking skills essential for effective participation in work, higher learning and the broader community. The course fosters the ability of students to approach complex tasks flexibly, to analyse and synthesise data from new situations, to develop considered responses in accordance with a balanced methodology and to reflect on the processes in which they engage. These experiences are of particular value to those students intending to undertake tertiary study, by providing an introduction to the issues of how a discipline is structured and how it is learned. HSC History Extension lays a foundation for such tertiary study by raising the awareness of these issues in students and facilitating the transfer of higher order thinking skills from one area of study to another.

Who can take History Extension?

All students study HSC History Extension concurrently with, or following completion of, the HSC course in Ancient History and/or Modern History. The course assumes that students have achieved the outcomes for the Preliminary course in one or both of these two courses at a high standard.

The course builds on students' knowledge and understanding about the nature and sources of history acquired through Mandatory and Elective history in Stages 4 and 5 and in Stage 6 Ancient and Modern History courses. The focus on historiography and sustained historical enquiry within the course ensures that students progress beyond the knowledge and understanding outcomes in Stage 6 Modern and/or Ancient History.

The syllabus assumes that students have achieved a good standard in the Preliminary course for Ancient or Modern History, have developed sound critical thinking skills and the capacity to work independently. However, it is important that teachers note the following points about the purpose and design of the course:

- The nature of the course means teachers may need to play more of a tutoring/ facilitating role as students will be working across a range of topics instead of on one specific area (as has been the case with 3 unit courses). Students will need guidance and stimulus from their teacher but they will also be expected to have sound independent learning skills.

How is the course structured?

The course requires students to investigate What is History? through five key questions:

- What are the historical debates?
- Who are the historians?
- What are the aims and purposes of history?
- How has history been constructed and recorded over time?
- Why have approaches to history changed over time?

The course comprises two interrelated parts linked by these questions.

In Part I (A): What is History?

What is History?, students examine readings from a variety of historians and do one case study from a list of options provided in the syllabus.

The readings provide a range of views about the nature, purpose, and approaches to history over time. Analysis and discussion of the issues raised by the readings enable students to place their particular case study into a broader theoretical context. As well, the understanding of historiography developed from the readings is used as a means to examine and explore issues raised through the individual project in Part II of the course.

In Part I (B): The Case Study

The case study provides a specific context from ancient, medieval, modern or Australian history through which students examine how theoretical understanding from the readings can be applied to specific areas of historical debate.

Students investigate ONE of the following Case Studies.

Ancient

- 1 Ancient Egypt and the Life of Teti
- 2 The Origins and Early History of Israel
- 3 The End of the Bronze Age
- 4 The Origins of Rome
- 5 The Thucydidean View of Empire
- 6 The Impact of Rome on the Provinces
- 7 The Historicity of Jesus Christ
- 8 The Tacitean View of the Early Principate
- 9 The Problems of the Archaeology of a Site



Medieval and Early Modern

- 10 The Crusades — Campaigns of the Cross?
- 11 Martin Luther
- 12 Elizabeth I and the Elizabethan Age
- 13 Spain and the Aztec Empire

Modern

- 14 Confucianism and Chinese Industrialisation in the Sung Period
- 15 The Origins and Early Development of American Democracy
- 16 Napoleon — Reformer or Tyrant?

- 17 The Nature of Western Imperialism in the 19th Century
- 18 Winston Churchill — Statesman or Career Opportunist?
- 19 Appeasement — Peace or War?
- 20 The Nature of the Presidency of John Fitzgerald Kennedy

Australian

- 21 The Origins of the First Australians
- 22 The Arrival of the British in Australia
- 23 Women Convicts in NSW
- 24 The Bush Legend

Part II: The Project

This part of the course gives students the opportunity to apply what they are learning through the readings and case study to designing and conducting their own investigation into an area of changing historical interpretation.

Some investigations students have conducted in the past:

- Reasons for the 30 Year War
- Salvador Isabelino Allende
- Hirohito
- Constantine's conversion to Christianity
- Cleopatra VII
- Kim Il Sung
- The Vikings in Ireland
- The Rwandan Genocide.

Designing an Investigation

The topic must be developed from one or more of the following areas:

- a historical debate or controversy
- a historian's or archaeologist's work
- changing analysis of an archaeological site over time
- ethical issues surrounding an archaeological site
- contrasting approaches to a historical personality, issue or event
- museums as history
- history in the media — film, documentary, fiction, docudrama, drama, poetry, opera
- an interdisciplinary approach to the study of the history of a personality, issue or event
- the impact of global or national events at a regional or local level

- oral history
- historical biography
- local history
- the history of an institution
- critical analysis of a major historical work
- the use and misuse of history in either a specific context or over time.

The topic of the project should reflect an area of student interest; however, the topic:

- must focus on the fundamental historiographical concepts and issues of HSC History Extension
- may be developed from a case study but should cover substantially different ground
- must not overlap significantly with the examinable content of any other School Certificate or Higher School Certificate course.

Documenting the Project

The history project should be a product of the student's own work. It should be a piece of work that is free of plagiarism. Plagiarism may be broadly defined as presenting as one's own the thoughts, writings or inventions of another. While the students may draw on the assistance of other people in developing the project, the student must take care to avoid practices that may be the subject of claims of academic misconduct, including plagiarism.

Summary of External and Internal Assessment

HSC Course

Assessment of the components of the HSC History Extension course is designed to provide a balance of assessment instruments across the total internal and external assessment program in order to ensure valid assessment of all course outcomes.

Component	External Assessment	Internal Assessment
Part I: What is History?	Written examination 50 Question 1 25 Question 2 25	Assessment tasks 10
Part II: History Project		History Project 40 made up of: Proposal Essay Bibliography Process Log
Total	50	50

HSC External Examination Specifications

HSC History Extension Examination Paper

Time allowed: 2 hours

- There will be two sections.
- Both sections will be compulsory.
- Both sections will be of equal value.

Section 1

- There will be ONE essay question.
- The question will be compulsory.
- The question will use an unseen passage as a stimulus for exploration of issues of historiography reflected in the prescribed readings in the source book.

Section II

- There will be ONE essay question.
- The question will be compulsory.
- The question will ask candidates to analyse a historiographical issue with specific reference to the case study.