

GCSE (9–1) History

Supporting great
history teaching



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*Pearson's paid-for resources, as well as other endorsed resources, are not a prerequisite for the delivery of Pearson Edexcel specifications.



Pearson Edexcel GCSE (9–1) History

This brochure will guide you through our Pearson Edexcel GCSE (9–1) History qualification. As both an **awarding body** and a **publisher**, we'll outline how the course is designed to engage your students, as well as the unparalleled support and resources we provide for all aspects of planning, delivery and assessment of the qualification.

Our qualification has:

- 1 a flexible specification with topics that teachers want to teach and students want to study **Page 4**
- 2 a manageable approach to the new Historic Environment requirement **Pages 6–7**
- 3 clear and consistent exam papers and mark schemes **Pages 8–11**
- 4 unbeatable and expert support every step of the way **Pages 12–19.**

Look out for Pearson's published resources on pages 13, 15, 16 and 19!



Supporting great history teaching

History matters. That's why our GCSE (9–1) history qualification encompasses a wide range of themes, historical events and eras, so students can understand the past and its impact on the world around us.

There's no particular way to teach history. With our specification, there's choice and flexibility across options that means you can teach the topics that work best for you and your students. And when it comes to our assessments, they're built to encourage every student to best show what they know and can do.

It's shaped by you, for your students. We've worked with hundreds of practising teachers and the history education community to create a qualification that'll help students become confident and successful historians. What's more, we'll support you every step of the way with tools and published resources to help you plan, teach, track and assess our course with confidence.

“Most of us spend too much time on the last 24 hours and too little on the last 6,000 years.”

Will Durant

A flexible specification with topics that teachers want to teach and students want to study

Our new Pearson Edexcel GCSE (9–1) specification brings together elements of the former Modern World and Schools History Project courses so GCSE students can explore a broader range of history than ever before.

- 1 **There's more to choose from.** Our specification covers more than a thousand years of history, from medieval England and the American West to Mao's China.
- 1 **The choice is yours.** There are no prohibited topic combinations, meaning you have the freedom to choose themes and eras that will work for you and your students.
- 1 **There's tailored support.** Our specification is supported by an unbeatable range of free tools and resources that help you plan, teach, track and assess every element of our course with confidence.
- 1 **There's consistency between our Edexcel GCSE, AS and A level qualifications.** Our GCSE specification was shaped alongside our new AS and A level courses so students can continue to succeed in history by building on what they've learned, rather than repeating it in further study.

- 1 **Popular topics were retained.** We kept the specification topics you told us you wanted to continue teaching. Date ranges from these topics have also stayed the same, enabling you to use existing materials.
- 1 **New topics were introduced to engage you and your students.** We chose to update and create new topics based on what you said you want to start teaching and on what you said you liked in the former controlled assessment units.
- 1 **Some topics run up to the present day,** so students can link events of the past to what's happening around them today.
- 1 **You construct the course that works for your students.** Topics throughout the course can be combined thematically to create a coherent teaching and learning pathway.
- 1 **Designed with progression in mind.** Our course builds on Key Stage 3 topics to help students confidently develop a more nuanced understanding of history. It also provides a stepping stone to further study at AS and A level with content and skills covered.

See more at
quals.pearson.com/gcsehistoryguide



A manageable approach to the Historic Environment requirement

With our unique approach to the Historic Environment requirement, the sites we’ve chosen stay the same throughout the lifetime of the course. That way, you can focus on teaching the history rather than planning and finding resources for a different site every year.

- **Based on your feedback, we’ve specified Historic Environment sites** so you can be confident that they will meet the new requirements.
- **The sites are proven to engage students**, as they relate to popular options in the previous specifications. What’s more, teachers have told us they think the sites will help encourage students to choose to study GCSE (9–1) History.
- **We’ve chosen sites with a rich array of contemporary sources** related to them, so there is plenty of ways to bring the history of the site to life.
- **Each Historic Environment site is linked to a thematic study**, so students only have to study four distinct areas of content rather than five. What students learn in Medicine, Crime, or Warfare will give a broad context for the detailed study of the associated site.
- **The sites give students an opportunity to study modern British history**, as well as build on what they’ve learned in the British breadth and depth topics.

Our qualification at a glance

Our course is designed to help your students make conceptual, geographical, period and thematic links between topics.

We’ve linked topics in Paper 1 together, so students can apply their contextual understanding from the thematic study to the Historic Environment study.

Paper 1 – British Thematic Study with Historic Environment		
✓ 52 marks ⚖️ 30% weighting ⌚ 1 hour 15 minutes		
Choose one of the combinations below.		
Thematic Study (20%)		Historic Environment (10%)
➤ Crime and punishment in Britain, c1000 to present	with	➤ Whitechapel, c1870–1900: crime, policing and the inner city
➤ Medicine in Britain, c1250 to present	with	➤ The British sector of the Western Front: injuries, treatment and the trenches
➤ Warfare and British society, c1250 to present	with	➤ London and the Second World War, 1939–45

Paper 2 covers both British depth studies and period studies to act as a chronological and geographical ‘bridge’ between Paper 1 and Paper 3.

Paper 2 – Period Study and British Depth Study		
✓ 64 marks ⚖️ 40% weighting ⌚ 1 hour 45 minutes		
Choose one Period Study and one British Depth Study . All topic combinations are allowed.		
Period Study (20%)		British Depth Study (20%)
➤ Spain and the ‘New World’, c1490–c1555		➤ Anglo-Saxon and Norman England, c1060–88
➤ British America 1713–83: empire and revolution		➤ The reigns of King Richard I and King John, 1189–1216
➤ The American West, c1835–c1895		➤ Henry VIII and his ministers, 1509–40
➤ Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941–91		➤ Early Elizabethan England, 1558–88
➤ Conflict in the Middle East, 1945–95		

Having paper 3 solely on the non-British modern depth study enables students to focus on one era and explore how and why the historical interpretations of it differ.

Paper 3 – Modern Depth Study	
✓ 52 marks ⚖️ 30% weighting ⌚ 1 hour 20 minutes	
Choose one of the topics below.	
➤ Russia and the Soviet Union, 1917–41	
➤ Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918–39	
➤ Mao’s China, 1945–76	
➤ The USA, 1954–75: conflict at home and abroad	

Clear and consistent exam papers and mark schemes

Our assessments are designed to be straightforward and consistent, encouraging all students to show what they know and understand about history to the best of their ability. Our three shorter papers cover specific areas of study, allowing students to focus more on certain topics and skills.

Clear question papers

- 1 Clear questions and **accessible language** are used throughout the exams, so each student can understand what they're being asked to do.
- 2 Gradual ramping of demand throughout sections and papers encourages all students to engage with every part of the exams.

The diagram shows a section of a question paper. On the left, a vertical label reads 'DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA'. The question text is: '1 Give **two** things you can infer from Source A about Hitler's leadership of the Nazi Party in the 1920s. Complete the table below to explain your answer.' Below this is a table with two rows. The first row is labeled '(i) What I can infer:' and has a large space for writing. The second row is labeled '(ii) What I can infer:' and also has a large space for writing. Below each row is a section labeled 'Details in the source that tell me this:' with lines for writing. A callout box points to the question text, stating: 'Each paper starts with an **accessible question** that all students can tackle with confidence.' Another callout box points to the table, stating: 'The **answer space** for these questions reminds students to give two inferences and to support these with details from the source.'

For high-tariff questions, students are given **two stimulus points**, which act as a prompt to help them focus their answers appropriately.

The diagram shows a section of a question paper. On the right, a vertical label reads 'DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA'. The question text is: '5 'There was little progress in medicine in Britain during the Renaissance period (c1500–c1700)'. How far do you agree? Explain your answer. (16)'. Below this is a box labeled 'You may use the following in your answer:' containing two bullet points: 'the work of William Harvey' and 'bloodletting and purging'. Below the box is the text 'You **must** also use information of your own.' At the bottom, it says '(Total for spelling, punctuation, grammar and use of specialist terminology = 4 marks)' and '(Total for Question 5 = 20 marks)'.

Three shorter papers: an assessment model teachers prefer

- 1 With three papers, there are **more opportunities** for students to show what they can do.
- 2 There's a maximum of two topics covered in every paper, so students don't need to switch between topics too often in an exam.
- 3 We've balanced assessment objectives across the papers so **students can focus on particular skills** in the exams.
- 4 Papers are shorter, so students are less likely to be affected by exam fatigue.

Straightforward level-based mark schemes

- 1 We researched and trialled our mark schemes with examiners and schools across the country to ensure they're clear and reward responses appropriately.
- 2 Our mark schemes classify level descriptors as distinct 'traits', so you can see how individual traits progress across levels.
- 3 There's a **consistent approach across questions** that test the same assessment objectives and comparable qualities, so you can focus on the historical skills and understanding rather than the mechanics of individual questions.
- 4 Our mark schemes are designed in a similar way at AS and A level too, so students can see how to progress in their history studies across the Key Stages.

Discover more on assessment overleaf

What assessment of Edexcel GCSE (9–1) History will look like

These tables give an overview of the question breakdown in each paper.

Paper 1 – British Thematic Study with Historic Environment

✓ 52 marks ⚖️ 30% weighting ⌚ 1 hour 15 minutes			
Section A: Historic environment 10%	AO1	Describe two features of...	4 marks
	AO3	How useful are Sources A and B for an enquiry into...?	8 marks
	AO3	How could you follow up Source [A/B] to find out more about...?	4 marks
Section B: Thematic study 20%	AO1/ AO2	Explain one way in which X was [similar/different] to Y.	4 marks
	AO1/ AO2	Explain why...	12 marks
	AO1/ AO2	'[Statement.]' How far do you agree? Explain your answer.	16 marks + 4 marks for SPaG

Paper 2 – Period Study and British Depth Study

Change to Paper 2 layout:

From summer 2019 onwards, Paper 2 will be split into two physical question-and-answer booklets: the Period study (booklet P), and the British depth study (booklet B). Students will only be provided with questions for the topics they have studied. The specification and SAMs are being updated to reflect this change.

There are no changes to the Paper 2 topics or questions themselves, the timing of the examination (1 hour 45 mins) or the application of the mark scheme. On the day of the Paper 2 exam, candidates will also be provided with a separate sheet containing key information on how pupils should complete the two question-and-answer booklets.

✓ 64 marks ⚖️ 40% weighting ⌚ 1 hour 45 minutes			
Booklet P: Period Study 20%	AO1/ AO2	Explain two consequences of...	8 marks
	AO1/ AO2	Write a narrative account analysing...	8 marks
	AO1/ AO2	Explain two of the following: The importance of X for Y.	16 marks
Booklet B: British Depth Study 20%	AO1	Describe two features of...	4 marks
	AO1/ AO2	Explain why...	12 marks
	AO1/ AO2	'[Statement.]' How far do you agree? Explain your answer.	16 marks

Paper 3 – Modern Depth Study

✓ 52 marks ⚖️ 30% weighting ⌚ 1 hour 20 minutes			
Section A	AO3	Give two things you can infer from Source A about...	4 marks
	AO1/ AO2	Explain why....	12 marks
Section B	AO3	How useful are Sources B and C for an enquiry into...?	8 marks
	AO4	What is the main difference between the views?	4 marks
	AO4	Suggest one reason why Interpretations 1 and 2 give different views about...	4 marks
	AO4	How far do you agree with Interpretation [1/2] about...?	16 marks + 4 marks for SPaG

Assessment objectives

AO1:	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key features and characteristics of the periods studied.
AO2:	Explain and analyse historical events and periods studied using second-order historical concepts.
AO3:	Analyse, evaluate and use sources (contemporary to the period) to make substantiated judgements, in the context of historical events studied.
AO4:	Analyse, evaluate and make substantiated judgements about interpretations (including how and why interpretations may differ) in the context of historical events studied.

See Past Papers, SAMs, examiner-marked Exemplars and more at: quals.pearson.com/gcsehistoryguide.

Unbeatable and expert support every step of the way

Our support takes many forms, all with the aim of helping you plan, teach, track and assess our Pearson Edexcel GCSE (9–1) History with confidence. From free events and materials to paid-for published resources*, much of this support is already available for you to get started with now.

Got questions about the new course? Send them along to our team. You can sign up to receive emails from us and be kept up to date about training events, news and government announcements, entry deadlines and much more.

Subject support

If you'd like to speak to one of our history experts about our specification, or how best to design a course to suit your school, let us know at:

📞 **020 7010 2186**
🐦 **@Pearson_History**
✉ **teachinghistory@pearson.com**



Mark Battye,
History Subject Advisor

Thinking of switching to our specification?

We have created a range of specific switching support to save you time, give you confidence and help you from the moment you start delivering the qualification, right up to results day and beyond.

If you're thinking of switching to Pearson Edexcel for GCSE History, and have questions about our specification or the support we provide, you can **chat to advisor** and sign up for your **free switching support guide** at:
quals.pearson.com/gcsehistguideSwitch



Plan

When it comes to planning, we provide support and resources to help you design your course and get ready to teach.

Free support

- 📌 **Mapping documents** guidance to help if you're thinking of moving from another awarding body.
- 📌 **Course planners** for teaching a two-year or three-year Key Stage 4.
- 📌 **Schemes of work for every topic**, including an online interactive scheme of work that provides you with a planning tool which recommends how long to spend on each unit.
- 📌 **Getting Started guide.**
- 📌 **Assessment guide**
- 📌 **A guide to sources and interpretations**

Available now

Pearson resources*

Lesson plans with differentiation ideas

Our unique ActiveLearn Digital Service includes lesson plans linked to the Pearson Edexcel schemes of work to help you teach the key content and requirements. They also contain differentiation ideas to help you keep all your students engaged and making progress, along with worksheets to make delivering your lessons even easier.



*Pearson's paid-for resources, as well as other endorsed resources, are not a prerequisite for the delivery of Pearson Edexcel specifications.

Find out more at www.pearsonschools.co.uk/gcsehistoryresources

Teach

When it comes to teaching, we provide support and resources to help you guide your students' learning and success throughout the course.

Free support

- **Topic booklets for every topic**, with an overview of every topic, a student timeline and a list of useful materials for teachers and students.
- **Guide to teaching Thematic Studies**
Advice from experienced teachers, guidance on possible barriers to progress and activity suggestions.
- **Guide to teaching the Historic Environment requirement**
Suggestions for teaching strategies for this new requirement.
- **Thinking Historically progression map** outlining the misconceptions that students may typically face in the key strands of Evidence, Cause & Consequence, Change & Continuity and Interpretations.

Paid-for published resources

We're committed to helping teachers deliver our Pearson Edexcel qualifications and students to achieve their full potential.

To do this, our qualifications are supported by endorsed resources* produced by a range of publishers, including ourselves.

Endorsed resources are available at

[quals.pearson.com/gcsehistoryguide](https://www.pearson.com/gcsehistoryguide).

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Available now

Supporting great history teaching

Pearson's paid-for resources support the delivery of Pearson Edexcel GCSE (9–1) History and are designed to help your students become **confident, articulate historians** able to access and develop the skills needed for the new assessments.

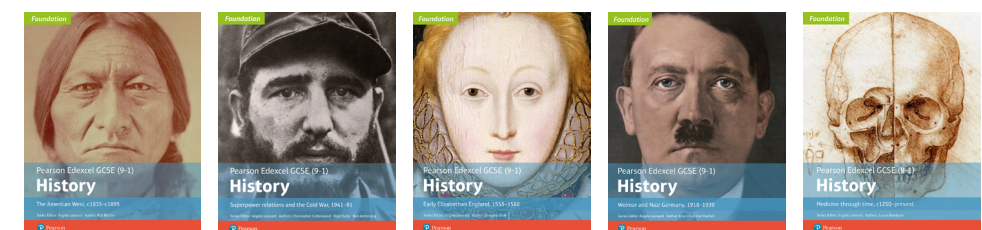
Student Books for every option in the specification



Series edited by Angela Leonard, these engaging textbooks will guide you and your students throughout the new course. Also available as ActiveBooks and Kindle editions, these accessible books provide support with developing conceptual understanding and literacy skills, include sample answers and commentaries, and offer help with all the new assessment requirements.

Foundation Student Books

We offer greater support to students with weaker literacy skills, or those for whom English is not their first language by providing foundation versions of the Student Books for the five most popular options.



Download free samples and request evaluation copies at:
www.pearsonschools.co.uk/gcsehisteval

Samples available now

🔧 ActiveLearn Digital Service including:

- front-of-class Student Books
- lesson plans with differentiation ideas
- worksheets and end-of-unit assessments
- exam skills PowerPoints.



🔧 Revision Guides and Revision Workbooks.

Target intervention workbooks

Our intervention workbooks can help your students **catch up, keep up and make expected progress** in GCSE (9–1) History.

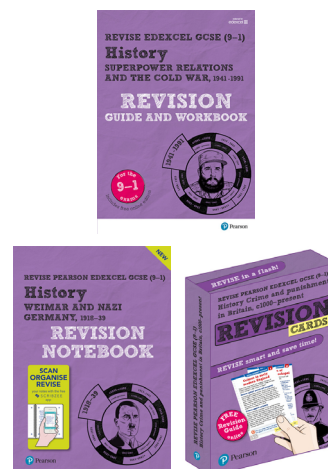
Aimed at students who should be on track for either grade 5 or grade 9 but are falling behind, these workbooks are designed to **help students reach their target grade**.



Revision materials

Our combined Revision Guide and Workbooks provide great value revision for students, with a one topic-per-page format, no lengthy set-up time and no complex revision concept.

Also now available for are our new **NEW Revision Card Packs** – perfect for students who want to turbocharge their revision time – and **NEW Revision Notebooks** that make it easy for you to scan, organise, access and revise your notes at any time.



Schools' discount!

Schools can get any Target workbook or (print) combined Revision Guide and Workbook for a discounted schools' price when quoting a discount code at the checkout. Get your discount code at: www.pearsonschools.co.uk/gcsehistoryresources

Develop

When it comes to Professional Development, we run a range of events to support great history teaching. What's more, these events also count towards your CPD hours.

Free Network events

At these regular face-to-face or online events, you can join our GCSE specialists to:

- 🔧 develop deeper knowledge of our GCSE, with a different focus each term
- 🔧 network and share teaching ideas and strategies.

Free recorded training events

You can also view free pre-recorded feedback events, which evaluate national performance of candidates from the summer 2018 examination series on our website, along with free recordings of our Getting Ready to Teach events, which support delivery of our specification.

Access these free pre-recorded training events at:
quals.pearson.com/gcsehistorypre

“I've taken away a good understanding of what the course involves and it's helped shaped my decision.”

Launch event attendee

Book your place at: quals.pearson.com/gcsehistorytraining

Track and assess

When it comes to tracking progress and preparing for assessment, we'll provide support and resources to help you and your students throughout the course.

Free support

- 📌 Assessment guide
- 📌 Examiner-marked exemplar student responses
- 📌 Past Papers including examiner reports enhanced with student exemplars, mark schemes and examiner reports
- 📌 Specimen papers and mark schemes
- 📌 Sample Assessment Materials and mark schemes
- 📌 Pre-recorded training from our 2018 series Network events
- 📌 KS3 and GCSE baseline tests, with guide and markbook

Access these free materials at: quals.pearson.com/gcsehistoryguide

📌 ResultsPlus

ResultsPlus provides the most detailed analysis available of your students' exam performance. Widely used by teachers across the country, this free online service enables you to identify topics and skills where students could benefit from further learning, helping them gain a deeper understanding of history.

quals.pearson.com/resultsplushistory

📌 examWizard

examWizard is a free exam preparation tool containing a bank of past Pearson Edexcel GCSE History exam questions, mark schemes and examiners' reports.

quals.pearson.com/examwizardhistory

📌 ActiveLearn Progress & Assess

- free progression maps, to track students' progress from 11–16
- baseline tests to assess every student's starting point.

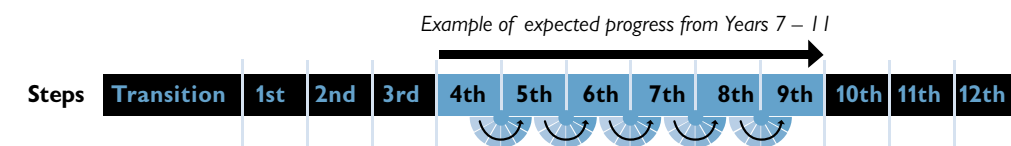


The Pearson Progression Scale

The Pearson Progression Scale is a progression model designed to help track progress in history.

The Scale defines 12 steps of progress in history for students between the ages of 11 years and 16 years. Progress is defined along different 'strands' covering the second order concepts at the core of the GCSE qualification, and the necessary acquisition and understanding of historical knowledge. The average student is expected to make one step of progress per year.

In the example below, a student starting on step 4 at the start of Year 7 will be expected to be on step 9 at the end of Year 11.



The Pearson Progression Scale provides a simple and clear way of reporting progress to both students and parents.

Other publishers with endorsed resources include:

- 📌 Hodder Education
- 📌 ZigZag Education.

Show the progress your students are making

Download a free, ready-made and editable Progression Scale and Map, covering ages 11–16, representing how learning progresses in history and how understanding and skills build upon each other at

www.pearsonschools.co.uk/gcsehistoryprogress

Available now

Get in touch

For queries, information and support, we're here to help.

Call us on: **020 7010 2186**

Email us: **teachinghistory@pearson.com**

Follow us: **@Pearson_History**

Visit us online: **quals.pearson.com/gcsehistoryguide**

Discover our range of specific support to save you time and give you confidence in switching to our GCSE at:

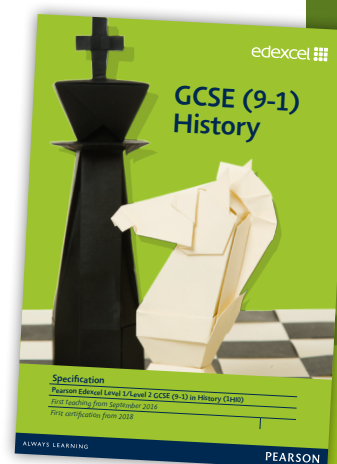
quals.pearson.com/gcsehistguideSwitch

Find more about our published resources at:

www.pearsonschools.co.uk/gcsehistoryresources

Why have we chosen to have chess pieces on the front of our new GCSE specification?

Chess has been played throughout the world for over 1,500 years. It was played by many of the famous characters in our history specification including William the Conqueror, King John, Henry VIII and Queen Elizabeth I. We chose chess pieces to highlight the chronological and geographical range of our new Pearson Edexcel GCSE (9–1) History specification. As well as being symbolic of conflict and power-relationships, they represent a link between the past and the present.



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