

Edexcel International GCSE in History update, March 2016

As you know, the Edexcel International GCSE in History is being updated for first teaching September 2017 (first assessment summer 2019). Following our consultations with teachers, higher education representatives and other stakeholders, we are making some changes to the content and assessment of the qualification in order to broaden the range of history available for you to choose from and also to ensure good progression to further study.

We're providing this document to help departments with planning, so that you can see the proposed changes before the final specification and sample assessment materials are made available.

Specification content

Paper 1: Depth Studies

Students must study at least **two** depth studies from the following:

- 1 The French Revolution, c1780–99
- 2 Development of a nation: unification of Italy, 1848–70
- 3 Development of dictatorship: Germany, 1918–45
- 4 Colonial rule and the nationalist challenge in India, 1919–47
- 5 Dictatorship and conflict in USSR, 1924–53
- 6 A world divided: superpower relations, 1943–72
- 7 A divided union: civil rights in the USA, 1945–74
- 8 South Africa: from union to apartheid, 1948–94

Paper 2: Investigation and breadth study

Students must study **one** historical investigation from the following:

- A1 The origins and course of the First World War, 1905–18
- A2 Russia and the Soviet Union, 1905–24
- A3 The USA, 1918–41
- A4 The Vietnam Conflict, 1945–75
- A5 East Germany, 1958–90

Students must study **one** breadth study in change from the following:

- B1 America from new nation to divided union, 1783–1877
- B2 Changes in medicine, c1848–c1948
- B3 Japan in transformation, 1853–1945
- B4 Conflict, crisis and change: China, 1900–89
- B5 The changing role of international organisations: the league and the UN 1919–c2011
- B6 The changing nature of warfare and international conflict, 1919–2011
- B7 Conflict, crisis and change: the Middle East, 1919–2012

Assessment overview

Paper 1

a) What impression does the author give about XXX? You must use Extract X to explain your answer.	AO4	6 marks
b) Explain two effects/consequences of X on/for Z.	AO1/2	8 marks
c) <i>choice of (i) or (ii)</i> '[Statement]' How far do you agree? Explain your answer. You may use the following in your answer: • [stimulus point 1] • [stimulus point 2] You must also use information of your own.	AO1/2	16 marks

Paper 2 Section A

a) Describe two features of either X or Y.	AO1	6 marks
b) How far does Source A support the evidence of Source B about X? Explain your answer.	AO3	8 marks
c) Extract C suggests that X. How far do you agree with this interpretation? Use Extract C, Sources A and B and your own knowledge to explain your answer.	AO3/4	16 marks

Paper 2 Section B

a) Explain two ways in which X was similar to/different from Y in the years ##-##.	AO1/2	6 marks
b) Explain two causes of X.	AO1/2	8 marks
c) <i>choice of (i) or (ii)</i> How far was X responsible for/did X bring about change in the years ##-##? You may use the following in your answer: • [stimulus point 1] • [stimulus point 2] You must also use information of your own.	AO1/2	16 marks

Assessment objectives

		% in International GCSE
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key features and characteristics of the periods studied	34%
AO2	Explain, analyse and make judgements about historical events and periods studied using second-order historical concepts	36%
AO3	Use a range of source material to comprehend, interpret and cross-refer sources	15%
AO4	Analyse and evaluate historical interpretations in the context of historical events studied	15%

FAQs

When will the final specification be available?

We expect the final specification and sample assessment materials to be online by early May.

Have the groups gone from Paper 1?

Yes, in the new structure, students still have to study two topics from Paper 1, but there are no groupings and no forbidden combinations, giving you greater choice and flexibility.

Why have the dates changed for some topics?

In updating the specification, we reviewed all of the topics in each section to ensure comparability and, as a result, the dates of some topics were amended.

Why have some topics removed?

We made the decision to remove some topics which have very low entries and to replace these with new areas of content – such as South Africa and Japan – which we felt broadened the scope of the International qualification. Other topics were removed due to the overlap of content with other areas of the specification which restricted the choice we could offer.

Why have the assessment objectives changed?

We wanted to ensure comparability between the International GCSE and the new UK GCSE specifications in order to ensure appropriate progression to the A level and to International A level. The assessment objectives have therefore been updated to better reflect the UK GCSE objectives. This has meant a slightly greater focus on historical interpretations – now AO4 – as analysis and evaluation of interpretations is a key part of the assessment of the new UK GCSE and new AS and A level courses.

Is the grading system changing?

With the introduction of a new 9-1 grading scale for GCSEs in England, the A* grade available for the current International GCSEs does not neatly align with the top grade 9. Grade 9 represents a higher level of attainment than the current A* grade. After extensive consultation with schools and wider stakeholders, we have taken the decision to introduce the 9-1 grading scale for the updated suite of International GCSEs. This is to give the very highest performers the opportunity to achieve a grade 9, rewarding outstanding academic achievement. With 9 levels of performance rather than 8, there is greater differentiation of the most able at the top end of the grading scale, which better identifies students' potential, putting you in a stronger position to help students make informed decisions about their A level and university choices.