

**OCR ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY GCE
IN HISTORY (3835)**

**OCR ADVANCED GCE
IN HISTORY (7835)**

**Teacher Support and Coursework Guidance
Volume 1**

Second Edition

This Teacher Support and Coursework Guidance booklet is designed to accompany the OCR Advanced Subsidiary GCE and Advanced GCE specifications in History for teaching from September 2000.

A new edition has been produced to reflect the structural changes made in the wake of the Curriculum 2000 review. At the same time, the opportunity has been taken to improve the clarity of the overall text.

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Support materials for A2 Modules 2587-2589 and 2590-2591 are to be found in Teacher Support and Coursework Guidance Volume 2, along with advice on 'customising' OCR-set coursework questions and on the structure of a coursework essay (Modules 2592-2593).

1 Introduction

This booklet offers advice on issues which may prove of help to teachers preparing for OCR's AS and/or A Level specifications in History. We believe that the specifications offer teachers the opportunity and the flexibility to create courses of value which they will enjoy delivering and which their students will find both interesting and challenging.

From the very wide range of options available, Centres can create a coherent course which focuses on a specific country (e.g. America or France or Ireland or Russia) or period (e.g. the seventeenth century). Alternatively, options can be combined to allow students to take a broad view of, say, English history. Further, Centres can build in, if they wish, a thematic emphasis on social and economic or religious or military or political history.

Although framed for candidates aged 16-19, there is something here for every student, whether 16 or 30 or 75.

In this booklet, as in the specifications, the term **module** is used to describe teaching and learning requirements. The term **unit** describes a unit of assessment.

Aggregation

Teachers used to taking linear A Levels may not be familiar with 'aggregation.' When a candidate has taken enough units for the award of an AS or an A Level, the issue of a specification grade is not automatic. Teachers must ensure that, in addition to the entries for individual units (e.g. 2581, 2585 etc), their Examinations Officer makes an aggregation entry – 3835 for AS, 7835 for A Level – in the session when the candidate wishes to obtain the full qualification result.

History has no units shared with another subject so none may be used towards aggregation in, say, Ancient History. Equally, no other subject has units which may be used towards aggregation in History.

There are no terminal rules for AS. The units may be taken all in the January examination session, all in the June session or some in each session. For A2, Units 2590 and 2591 are synoptic and should normally be taken terminally (i.e. at the end of a candidate's course of study) but this is not a requirement.

As with previous A Level modular syllabuses, the new specifications use a Uniform Mark Scheme with common specification thresholds which remain constant year-on-year. The uniform marks gained by a candidate for all three/six individual units are added up and set against these standard thresholds:

A Level: A = 480, B = 420, C = 360, D = 300, E = 240

AS Level: A = 240, B = 210, C = 180, D = 150, E = 120

Availability

The History Units 2580-2591 are available for examination in January and in June. Only the coursework Units, 2592 and 2593, are available in June only.

Certification

Aggregation and certification can happen at any point, subject to the necessary units being available and completed by candidates.

Quality of written communication in History assessment

In new AS/A Levels, the quality of written communication is assessed where answers in continuous prose are required. By quality of written communication, QCA means the clarity of expression and the structure and presentation of the whole argument as well as grammar, punctuation and spelling.

The quality of written communication will thus directly affect both the band in which an answer is placed and the actual mark awarded. Teachers should look at the generic mark schemes for details of how examiners are required to assess the quality of written communication alongside the quality of the History. 'Quality' is the key. Teachers need to stress the vital need to avoid writing in note form and to avoid the use of abbreviations, colloquialisms and slang.

History-specific QCA criteria

The subject criteria for History may be found on QCA's website [www.qca.org.uk/a-as/history.htm].

Key Skills

Opportunities for the gathering of evidence for Key Skills portfolios are sign-posted throughout the History specification. Appendix A of the specification gives further guidance on Key Skills evidence that candidates might produce.

QCA has announced a range of so-called 'proxy qualifications' which, to avoid double assessment, grant exemption from taking some Key Skills external tests. Some of the proxy qualifications are:

- GCSE Maths at grades A*-C provides exemption for the external test in Application of Number at Level 2 (grades D-G at Level 1);
- GCSE English at grades A*-C provides exemption for the external test in Communication at Level 2 (grades D-G at Level 1), while AS English (Language or Literature) provides exemption for the external test in Communication at Level 3;
- GCSE ICT at grades A*-C provides exemption for the external test in IT at Level 2 (grades D-G at Level 1).

Candidates will still, however, need to complete their portfolio of evidence.

OCR has produced a range of detailed support material for Key Skills:

- 1 Key Skills with Curriculum 2000
- 2 Key Skills Support Guide for Students: AS/A Levels and GNVQ
- 3 Key Skills 2000 Scheme Book
- 4 Key Skills 2000 Centre Support Pack (2 vols)
- 5 Key Skills 2000 Candidate Log Book
- 6 Key Skills with Enrichment Schemes

Details of all of these, together with an order form, may be found in the OCR Publications Catalogue and on the OCR website www.ocr.org.uk.

Mark schemes

Every unit has a generic mark scheme and every unit except 2592-2593 also has a question-specific mark scheme. All marking is positive. Copies of past exam session mark schemes may be obtained from OCR Publications Department: 0870 870 6622. Centres are automatically sent a copy for every exam session in which they entered candidates.

Each mark scheme uses a six-band level of response system, corresponding directly to the grading system A-E and U. Examiners read each answer and decide first the generic band into which it fits. The question-specific mark scheme is then used to place the answer within that band, or move it up into the next band or move it down into the one below. The full range of marks is used as a matter of course (not only 90%, but 100%). For each band decision, the examiner has available a broad range of marks within which to place each answer – thus allowing great accuracy in awarding each answer the appropriate mark.

Modular or linear?

The way in which examination units are taken is a decision to be taken by each Centre. The units in the specifications may be taken in a linear manner (i.e. with all the units taken at the end of the course). Teachers may decide that such a route best suits their candidates and/or Centre. On the other hand, a scheme of AS units taken at the end of Year 12 and A2 units taken at the end of Year 13 may be preferred. Alternatively, Centres can use all four examination sessions available during a two-year course to spread the assessment load as much as possible.

For teaching from September 2001, candidates can take the full six units for Advanced GCE in one year. This may well suit private candidates and will certainly be of interest to those in FE Colleges or adult education.

Options: entries and question papers

Entry is not by option but by the unit in which it appears. All the options within one unit will be printed together as a single question paper for the unit (i.e. there will be one paper for all the options in Unit 2582) – the groupings of options per unit (and thus per examination paper) are shown in the specification on pp.v-viii. Some question papers are thus quite substantial booklets so every examination paper's front cover will have a rubric allowing teachers to point out to candidates *in the examination room* the precise part of the question paper covering the option(s) taught. The presence of a History specialist in the examination room at the start of each AS /A2 History examination is advisable.

Re-sit rules

Any individual unit (including the synoptic Units 2590 and 2591) may be retaken only once before certification. The better mark will always count towards the final grade (this includes the synoptic Units 2590-2591). Marks from AS units retaken after AS certification may count towards the final A Level grade, but a new AS grade will only be issued only if all the AS units are retaken and an AS entry is made.

A full qualification (i.e. three valid AS units and/or six valid A Level units) may be retaken more than once within the shelf-life of the specification.

Rules of combination

For AS, candidates take:

one of Units 2580, 2581 or 2582,

one of Units 2583 or 2584

and one of Units 2585 or 2586

For Advanced GCE, candidates take:

one of Units 2580, 2581 or 2582

one of Units 2583 or 2584

one of Units 2585 or 2586

one of Units 2587, 2588 or 2589

one of Units 2590 or 2591

and one of Units 2592 or 2593

For Advanced GCE, either Unit 2590 or Unit 2591 should normally be taken at the end of a candidate's course of study.

When Centres decide which option to teach out of each grouping of Modules [for AS: one from 2580-2582, one from 2583-2584, one from 2585-2586; for A2: one from 2587-2589, one from 2590-2591, one from 2592-2593], they may combine the historical topics and periods in whichever way best suits their own teachers' skills and interests and that Centre's resources.

Centres may thus create a route in which teaching modules overlap, join together end-on-end or are in no way connected to each other. Equally, they may plan two routes – say one group of sixteenth century modules and another of nineteenth century modules. When Centres plan their route(s), they should think about whether they want or need to have A2 modules buttressed by work already done at AS.

No questions will have a * banning an answer if a candidate is also taking a specified second Unit (as with the previous A Level syllabuses 9020 and 9625). All candidates have every question on every unit available to them.

Resource lists (see also Specification Support)

A resource list is provided in the specification for every option in every module. Items on these lists are only suggestions which teachers and students may find helpful – there are no prescribed texts for any option or module (on Modules 2580-2582 and 2587-2589 there are no prescribed documents). Lists for some options in Modules 2580-2582 identify a collection of documents available from OCR Publications. These collections relate to the previous Oxford & Cambridge 9625 A Level syllabus. None fit the specifications precisely, but they have been retained because teachers may find them useful as sources of exemplar documents for class work and practice.

To maximise usefulness, books have only been included where they are:

- currently in print, and
- available in paperback.

This does not mean that articles or books available only in hardback or out of print should be avoided. They have been excluded only because they are less readily available. At the same time, teachers need to be aware that publishers now keep books in print often for a short period and that for some options there are few books available in print (paperback or hardback).

OCR will make great efforts to keep the resource lists as accurate as possible. The A Level History Subject Officer will be very pleased to hear of errors in the current listing, of items included which have gone out of print and of valuable items (within the above criteria) which could be added. The lists will be updated every other year, with new editions available from OCR Publications and on OCR's website. (see Section 7 -OCR Contacts).

Endorsed Texts

Cambridge University Press has produced books, in its Cambridge Perspectives in History series, whose content fits some OCR AS History options.

Nine books were published in 2000 – 2001 for certain AS options. For details, see the current CUP catalogue (available from CUP on 01223 325588; fax: 01223 325152). An on-line catalogue (with ordering) can be found at www.cup.cam.ac.uk/education

Specification support (non-OCR)

In addition to OCR's own INSET programme, coursework proposal forms and the advice which may always be obtained from the Subject Officer, the following external support is already in place:

Further, two CUP books appeared in 2002 to support aspects of Module 2591. These new books are:

- The Changing Nature of Warfare;
- The Development of the Mass Media, both by Peter Browning.

Further AS and A2 books may be published.

The National Army Museum offers INSET to fit three OCR options:

- Module 2585 (AS): Europe 1498-1560 Study Topic 4: Warfare 1499-1560
- Module 2591 (A2): War & Society in Britain 1793-1918

The Changing Nature of Warfare 1792-1918

In addition, they run INSET courses of value to other options with military elements, such as The English Civil War (in Modules 2581 and 2583) and The Napoleonic Wars (in Modules 2586 and 2589). Details may be obtained from The Education Dept., The National Army Museum, Royal Hospital Road, Chelsea, London, SW3 4HT (phone 020 7730 0717 ext 2228; fax: 020 7823 6573; www.national-army-museum.ac.uk).

OCR is negotiating with other organisations to extend the range of external support offered. Details will be made available as soon as possible.

A Student Guide – History is available. This may be downloaded from the History section of the OCR website www.ocr.org.uk

Teaching time/specification manageability

With examinations twice a year and subject class time under pressure to create additional space for teaching a fourth AS and/or the overt teaching of Key Skills, subject contact time is at a premium.

The specification was designed, so that, for each option, a course could be taught in a defined period of time: eight teaching weeks with a total of eight 40 minute lessons per week (a common but, we recognise, by no means universal pattern in Centres). In addition to limiting examination demands in this way, we have:

- defined content precisely in each option;
- created content overlaps in Modules 2580-2582 with part of an option in Modules 2583-2584 or 2585-2586. This is deliberate, for teachers to exploit if they wish;
- included a set of 'Key Issues for Study and Examination' in options in Modules 2580-2589. These indicate (in skeletal form) the approach teaching and learning should take;
- guaranteed that in AS Units 2583-2586, each question will target a different Key Issue for the Study Topic it is testing. Thus two of the four Key Issues for every Study Topic will be examined each paper;
- guaranteed that on A2 Modules 2587-2589, the document question and the two essay questions set on every option will each target different Key Issues – again ensuring fair coverage in the examination;
- guaranteed that on A2 Modules 2590-2591, the three essays are on distinct areas of the syllabus – again ensuring fair coverage in the examination.

The specification for every option should be seen as a literal document, indicating precisely what will be assessed. Every Key Issue has a matching paragraph of specified content. Together they show precisely what needs to be taught.

AS standard

The level of demand of AS is that expected of a candidate at the end of the first year of a two-year A Level course.

Teachers should study carefully not only OCR's past AS questions but also the generic and question-specific mark schemes (demand is set both by the requirements of a question and the requirements of its mark scheme). Further, they could look at the papers and mark schemes for other options but within the same unit. Together, these materials indicate:

- the range of possible question types and wordings;
- the approach examiners take in marking;
- the expectations examiners have of candidates' qualities and skills.

Remember that progression from GCSE is achieved through:

- a higher level of command of the subject;
- a higher level of expected response (including quality of written communication);
- more demanding sources (Units 2580-2582);
- more examination time to tackle more demanding tasks.

The same is true of progression from AS to A2.

AS is aimed at 16-17 year olds after one year of study. Equally, it is designed for sixth formers looking for an additional AS subject to broaden their post-16 programme of study. Past AS papers and mark schemes are available from OCR's Publications department: 0870 870 6622.

A2 standard

The grade descriptors QCA has produced can be found in the specification in Section 4.6. Past A2 papers and mark schemes are available from OCR's Publications Department: 0870 870 6622.

Reports on past exams

Much valuable advice is contained within reports written by senior examiners after every exam session. Teachers are strongly advised to study these, and copies for past sessions are available from OCR's Publications department: 0870 870 6622. Centres are automatically sent a copy for every exam session in which they entered candidates.

OCR's website

Teachers are encouraged to consult the AS/A2 History section of OCR's website as well as other sections accessible from the home page, www.ocr.org.uk, such as those detailing INSET courses, giving the Publications Catalogue and indexing materials useful to Heads of Department.

2 Modules 2580-2582: Document Studies AS

Each of these modules is worth 40% of the AS and 20% of the A Level in History. All three units assessing these modules are available for examination in January and June. The examination lasts 1 hour, including reading time, and a rubric advises candidates to spend half their time on question (c). The total marks available are 120.

The three Key Issues per option are designed to serve as the core for a teacher's teaching plan. All three need to be taught to cover possible examination questions. Each Key Issue has its own accompanying paragraph of specified content. Together they show precisely what needs to be taught.

The papers for these units offer document exercises. Each option has one source-based exercise with three compulsory questions. Questions (a) and (c) **always** require the use of own knowledge as well as evidence drawn from the sources.

The three questions are formulaic in the consistent style and approach used on every paper:

- Question (a) **always** requires the explanation in context of a historical term or personality or event referred to in one of the sources, using that source and the candidate's own knowledge [mere paraphrase or description will not score highly];
- Question (b) **always** requires the comparison of **two** of the given sources;
- Question (c) **always** requires the use of all **four** sources and the candidate's own knowledge to test the validity of a given historical assertion.

[See the generic and question-specific mark schemes for detailed guidance].

The sources set for AS are tailored to AS (not A Level) standard. There are **always** four sources and they total 300-400 words. Language is modified and modernised as necessary to keep the sources accessible to the full range of 16-17 year old candidates; technical terms/concepts not directly within the specified content are glossed. Each source is given a brief factual introduction explaining the context. Each also has its provenance printed underneath. Three are always primary sources. The fourth may be primary or secondary. One source may be a set of statistics or a cartoon (not a painting or photograph). If a non-text source is used, it counts as the equivalent of 100 words.

3 Modules 2583-2584: English History Period Studies AS

Modules 2585-2586: European and World History Period Studies AS

These Modules are worth 30% of the AS (15% of the A Level). Modules 2583-2584 fulfil QCA's requirement for a minimum of 15% English history in an A Level course. Modules 2585-2586 fulfil the similar demand for a minimum of 15% Foreign history. All four are available for examination each January and June. The total marks available are 90. The examination lasts 45 minutes.

Every Option in each of these Modules has four Study Topics. OCR designed the specification so that each Centre would teach one Study Topic from an option in Modules 2583-2584 and one from Modules 2585-2586. Many Centres tell us that, indeed, that is how they have proceeded. But some have indicated that they teach two English and two European/American Study Topics – in order to extend the historical range covered by their course. Where Centres wish to offer two Study Topics, they do not have to come from the same option. The breakdown of options per module in the specification on pages vi-vii shows how the options will be grouped into two examination papers – there is one paper for each unit and candidates must be entered for one unit out of 2583-2584 and one unit out of 2585-2586. For example, a Centre could select Study Topic 3 from England 1509-58 and combine it with Study Topic 1 from England 1547-1603 because they fit together in subject matter. This works because both options are within Module 2583 and both are, therefore, assessed in Unit 2583. **Options drawn from different modules will not work because the related questions will appear on different examination papers.**

The four Key Issues per Study Topic are designed to serve as the core for a teacher's teaching plan. All four need to be taught to cover possible examination questions. Each Key Issue has its own accompanying paragraph of specified content. Together they show precisely what needs to be taught.

Every Study Topic has two questions set on every paper. Each question targets a different Key Issue – so two of the four are tested on each paper and candidates have to answer one of them.

Both questions should be seen as essays, which will also help in developing full essay skills for A2. Examiners will mark the essay out of 45 and then double the mark (the module is out of 90).

The mark schemes show the skills to be tested and their relative weightings in the scheme of assessment.

Each question always requires the comparative evaluation of several elements of a specified subject to come to an overall conclusion in a 'To what extent...' or 'How far...' or 'Why...' or 'Assess...' type question. Sharp focus and strong analysis, as well as sound knowledge, is required for high-band marks.

[See the generic and question-specific mark schemes for detailed guidance on the level of subject command and response required].

4 Modules 2587-2589: Historical Investigations

A2

History is a vibrant subject in which interpretations are challenged and perspectives altered by scholarly controversy. These modules seek to combine this emphasis on the changing landscape of historical understanding with the study of the key role of the individual in shaping an era.

Units 2587-2589 are worth 15% of the A Level in History and are available for examination each January and June. The total marks available are 90 and the examination lasts 1 hour 30 minutes, including reading time.

The four Key Issues in each Study Topic are designed to serve as the core for a teacher's teaching plan. All four need to be taught to cover possible examination questions. Each Key Issue has its own accompanying paragraph of specified content. Together they show precisely what needs to be taught. Teaching must focus on interpretations and the understanding of controversies (see below).

There are three equally weighted questions on each Study Topic (45 marks each). Question 1 is always be a document question and its two sub-parts are compulsory. Questions 2 and 3 are essays; candidates must answer one essay. Each of the three questions targets a different Key Issue.

Question 1 is set on four passages. Three are **always** secondary. The fourth may be secondary or may be primary. The exercise totals 500-600 words and passages are not modified beyond the level used in previous A Level examinations. One passage may be a set of statistics or a cartoon (not a photograph or painting); a non-text passage counts as equivalent to 100 words. Every passage is given a brief factual introduction explaining its context and its provenance. There are **always** two sub-questions. Part (i) asks for a comparison of the similarities and differences of historical interpretation on the given topic between **two** of the passages. Part (ii) requires an overview use of **all four** passages and the candidate's own knowledge in assessing and evaluating different ways of interpreting and understanding the topic/personality on which the document exercise has been set.

The essays similarly ask questions which require explanation and evaluation of the issues dividing scholars in the debate surrounding the issue which forms the subject of each essay. Rubrics on the paper remind candidates of the need to discuss interpretations in every question, document or essay. Answers which make no use of any interpretations may not, however good the general analysis and evaluation, be given a mark in Band A.

[See the question-specific and generic mark schemes for detailed guidance on the demands of both types of question].

Please note: These units do **not** require specific knowledge of any particular historian and where he/she stands within the great debate. No presumption is made that candidates have even heard of the individual scholars whose writings form the source extracts on the question paper, or know which line of interpretation each author supports – so the introduction to each source gives sufficient context to make this clear (although candidates are likely to recognise many names). On the other hand, candidates must be aware of different schools of interpretation and understand the broad issues at stake between them, and must be able to explain and evaluate them. Teaching **must** therefore take an approach that gives such a focus. To assist teachers, OCR has provided a summary guiding teachers on how to approach each option. These are available in the Teacher Support and Coursework Guidance Volume 2.

5 Modules 2590-2591: Themes In History

A2

Modules 2590 and 2591 aim to introduce students to the enhanced historical understanding available only when a longer perspective is taken. They fulfil the QCA requirement for the study of a period of at least 100 years and thus enable Units 2590 and 2591 to include synoptic assessment.

Units 2590 and 2591 are available for examination in January and June. Each examination is worth 20% of the A Level and lasts 1 hour 30 minutes.

Modules 2590 and 2591 are divided into a number of options, most of which contain two Key Themes. Each Key Theme has three essays set per question paper and each essay tests a different aspect of the specification. Candidates must answer any two essays from the unit (not option) they are entered for – thus allowing Centres to teach two different Key Themes within a module. Candidates **must** show knowledge and understanding of a period of at least 100 years in **each** of their answers. A rubric on the examination paper reminds candidates of this QCA requirement and any answer which fails to do this may not, however good the general analysis and evaluation, be given a mark in Band A.

Questions are thematic and cover change, development and continuity over 100 years or more. Each Key Theme must be taught and studied in terms of a sense of continuity, change and development, thereby enabling candidates to write a developmental account evaluating the scale and extent of change (i.e. the pattern of development) in the subject of the essay. The synoptic modules are **not** traditional outlines courses, associated with most previous A Levels, requiring detailed factual knowledge (as well as understanding) of many specified elements together making up the course. The question papers are very different in concept because they take a perspective, broad-brush, overview of the century-long period. Their objective is the perception of patterns, with the focus on the causes and consequences of continuity, development and change over the full period of the Key Theme. To teach these, Centres should

- identify the key moments/periods of change in their chosen Key Theme;
- identify periods of continuity in their chosen Key Theme;
- identify the reasons for those changes, developments and continuities;
- identify the consequences of those changes, developments and continuities.

Then they need to

- link the results of the above research together by constructing a developmental account over the full 100-year plus period of the Key Theme;
- pay particular attention to the pace of change (even/uneven across the Key Theme).

Factual examples should next (and only then) be selected to illustrate those moments of change and periods of continuity – hence most of the factual details (and much of the narrative story) within the 100-year period can be ignored as irrelevant.

Teachers may well find that the easiest way to approach their preparation (and perhaps at least elements of their teaching) is to take the Key Theme backwards – identifying the situation at the end of the Key Theme and then creating a course to show why and how that position had been reached over the previous 100-plus years.

To assist Centres, OCR has produced a one-page summary of some turning points around which each Key Theme could be taught and studied. These are available in the Teacher Support and Coursework Guidance Volume 2.

Further, to help make the point that teaching and learning should avoid amassed factual detail, each 2590 and 2591 examination paper is accompanied by a booklet containing, for every Key Theme examined in that Unit, a chronology outlining major events associated with that Key Theme. Candidates should use these in constructing their answers during the examination and, so that they are familiar with them in advance, copies are available in the Teacher Support and Coursework Guidance Volume 2. Teachers are asked to incorporate the use of the chronology into their lessons and into tasks set to their candidates.

Although OCR's previous A Level Oxford syllabus 9930 (Unit 3) and A Level Cambridge History Project syllabus 9022 (domain 3) had papers or questions demanding change and development over-view perspectives, many teachers will not be used to such a requirement and teaching must be carefully thought through so that it takes such an approach.

6 Modules 2592 and 2593: Independent Investigation

A2

6.1 Coursework and coursework options

6.1.1 The nature and purpose of coursework

The purpose of each of Modules 2592 and 2593 is to enable candidates to carry out a detailed historical investigation of their own choosing. Freedom of choice should enable candidates to pursue topics of personal interest, around which to display a range of appropriate historical knowledge, understanding and skills. At the very least, coursework studies provide candidates with a valid historical experience; in the best cases, they enthuse candidates and can make a genuine contribution to historical knowledge.

6.1.2 Coursework options

Units 2592 and 2593 are only available in June. Approval by OCR of proposed questions is not required.

Unit 2592

Candidates produce an Investigation of their own, in the form of an extended essay of around 2,500 words; the maximum length is 3000 words, excluding only the footnotes and the bibliography. The topic for investigation can be taken from a list of 10 essay questions offered each year by OCR, or take the form of a question devised by the candidate. Centres can seek guidance from OCR about the appropriateness of any questions in a coursework proposal form. In either case, the question requires critical investigation, analysis and evaluation of an historical issue from any period of British (Welsh, Scottish, Irish, English), European or World History from 768 AD – i.e. the earliest point in the specification: the accession of Charlemagne as king of the Franks. An important part of the analysis and evaluation must be centred on the discussion and evaluation of source material (primary and/or secondary) and/or historical interpretations. Essays which fail to do this fail to meet AO2 and may not, however good the general analysis and evaluation, be given a Band A mark.

Unit 2593

Candidates have to select one of the 10 essay questions offered by OCR. They then undertake an investigation which, in both method and approach, is the same as for candidates who choose a title from the OCR-set option in Unit 2592 (including the prescription on essays dealing with a topic or events pre-768 AD). The difference is that, instead of producing a personal study, candidates entered for Unit 2593 prepare for a shorter extended essay to be written in an open-book examination lasting 1 hour 30 minutes. In this, candidates may use their own books and notes.

In summary, the three available coursework routes are:

- Centre-based study: candidate's own proposal [Unit 2592]
- Centre-based study: OCR-set question [Unit 2592]
- Open-book examination: OCR-set question [Unit 2593]

In all three routes, the overt discussion and evaluation of source material (primary and/or secondary) and/or historical interpretations is required, and carries a significant share of the marks. Essays which fail to do this may not, however good the general analysis and evaluation, be given a mark in Band A.

For Units 2592 and 2953, one OCR-set essay question is set each year for each of the following 10 areas:

- The Arts and History
- Economic History
- The Individual in History
- Local History
- Military History
- Political History
- Religious History
- Science, Technology and History
- Social History
- World History

These ten topic areas remain the same from year to year. The actual essay question set on each area will, however, change every year.

6.2 Unit 2592: Independent Investigation (Coursework): Candidate-Proposed Questions

6.2.1 The preparation and planning of coursework

Candidates for Unit 2592 need first to decide whether they want to 'adopt' one of the OCR-set questions as their topic for investigation, or make their own proposal. Advice on how to customise an OCR - set question to a particular period or country or personality is given in the Teacher Support and Coursework Guidance Volume 2. If a candidate picks his/her own question, the process can be broken down into a number of stages:

- **Choosing the topic.** The process begins with the identification of an historical problem or issue that merits investigation and is capable of critical analysis using sources and/or interpretations. This may take the form of a more detailed study of some aspect of the specification that the candidate has followed, or it can reflect an area of interest from outside the taught specification. The scope of the problem or issue should be neither too broad nor too narrow; rather, it should be sufficient to provide a vehicle for valid and effective historical investigation (using a manageable range of source material) within the stated word guide length.
- **Framing the question.** Once the problem or issue has been identified, it must to be expressed as a question. Questions for Investigations need:
 - (i) to make the same level of demand on candidates as questions set by OCR, although they need not be of the same generic type as those in the published OCR list;
 - (ii) to allow candidates access to all the specification assessment objectives – in particular the more highly weighted AO2, requiring an ability to interpret source material and/or evaluate interpretations. Essays which fail to do this, however good the general analysis and evaluation, may not be given a mark in Band A;
 - (iii) to be framed in a way that signals an investigation requiring some sort of historical judgement. The most familiar (but by no means only) way of doing this is by the use of phrases such as “To what extent...?” or “How far...?” in the title;
 - (iv) to be worded as simply and precisely as possible;
 - (v) to set the investigation within a manageable time span - for example: “To what extent did England become protestant during the reign of Elizabeth I?” rather than “To what extent did England become protestant during the sixteenth century?”
 - (vi) to recognise the limitations of around 2500 words – avoiding very broad issues such as “What were the causes of the English Civil War?” which could not be handled effectively in so short an essay.

As a general rule it is better to write a lot about a little, choosing a 'medium-sized' problem or issue consistent with the word limit and the range of available source material. Examples expressed as a question might be:

Is it fair to condemn John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland on the evidence of the last two months of his life?

To what extent was the Fourth Crusade a religious phenomenon?

How far does Volkogonov's study of Lenin change our view of him?

*How far were the Ranters **the** radicals of the English Revolution?*

How have historians' views of Frederick the Great changed over the centuries?

Why was a compromise possible in the USA in 1850 but not in 1860-61?

Where was the lost village of Winterstoke (Gloucestershire)?

- **The role of the teacher: Planning.** Teacher guidance is essential at the planning stage. The actual amount of advice given is likely to vary from candidate to candidate. Advice should be given on the choice of an effective subject, the availability and relative value of various source material and secondary books, research techniques, the need to avoid narrative and how to structure a successful analytical essay.
- **Range of candidate questions within a Centre.** Whether candidates in a Centre are all required to devise their own question, or are given the choice between the two routes in Unit 2592 (or the choice between the two routes in Unit 2592 and the open-book examination in Unit 2593), is a decision to be taken by the teachers in each Centre. Within a Centre, some candidates can propose their own question while others use the OCR-set questions, and some can take Unit 2592 while others take Unit 2593.

Whether candidates are given a free choice of historical period, or are required to work on an area relating to part of the taught AS/A2 course, is similarly a matter to be decided within each Centre.

There is no ban on several candidates proposing different questions from within the same topic area, such as The Henrician Reformation or the Third French Republic (just as a number of candidates may pick the same OCR-set topic and apply it to the same country/period/personality).

6.2.2 The completion of coursework

Carrying out the investigation. Candidates collect source material, read and make notes on the topic, draft and re-draft their essay, and eventually produce the finished study. Candidates are advised to keep all research notes and draft versions, *as well as a copy of the finished study (in case of loss or damage in the post)*.

Writing up the study. The Investigation can be written at any point during the two-year course. However, Centres are recommended to use Year 13 for this purpose in order to take full advantage of candidates' broader contextual knowledge and, consequently, of their enhanced ability to make links and connections over time or between different elements of the subject. When writing up the study, candidates must answer their chosen question. They should focus on analysis and judgement and not slide into descriptive narrative. This means constructing the kind of argument that is appropriate to answering the question. For example, in testing a statement or hypothesis, it is necessary to employ evidence that both supports *and* undermines the statement. Alternatively, a study trying to assess the importance of a particular factor in an explanation needs to establish its importance *relative to other factors*. Similarly, a study investigating the significance of a particular event as a turning point within a line of development needs to set the event *within a context of prior and subsequent events*. Advice on how to construct an effective essay is given in the Teacher Support and Coursework Guidance Volume 2.

The length for an investigation should be **not less than** 2300 words and **not more than** 3000 words, excluding only footnotes and bibliography and (if used) any statistical tables, diagrams and graphs.

Candidates **must** provide a bibliography, and use footnotes to acknowledge quotations, as part of their investigation and **must** remember that their quality of written communication is also assessed (see the published Unit 2592 generic mark scheme).

The role of the teacher. During the research and writing stages, teachers may give regular guidance to candidates on any practical or conceptual problems encountered. They should monitor progress to ensure the work is kept within the bounds of relevance and that the candidate is keeping to his/her planned schedule for completion of the work.

However, teachers **must not correct the written content in any way (either notes or rough drafts or the final version)**. It is essential that the essay submitted represents the candidate's own work.

Packaging the finished Investigation. A completed study should be clearly written, preferably word-processed, on A4 paper and the pages numbered. Text should be double spaced and all pages must be fastened together, along with the cover sheet. The essay should be placed in a soft folder (ring binders are not acceptable; folders are not provided by OCR).

Coursework Proposal Forms and Cover Sheets. OCR sends coursework forms to Examinations Officers each year. Requests for additional copies should be faxed to the following number: 01223 552678.

6.3 Unit 2592: Independent Investigation (Coursework)

OCR-set questions

Unit 2593: Independent Investigation

(Open Book examination) OCR-set questions

6.3.1 Choosing the topic and question

Candidates taking coursework via an OCR-set essay (the same titles are used for Units 2592 and 2593) first select the one topic from OCR's list of ten they would like to investigate. They then decide the historical period or personality to which they would like to apply the chosen topic's question. Advice on 'customising' these questions is given in the Teacher Support and Coursework Guidance Volume 2.

The ten topics will remain constant, but the individual essay questions will change every year.

Candidate-proposed questions are **not** permitted in Unit 2593.

6.3.2 Carrying out and submitting the Investigation

Once the topic and period/personality has been chosen, candidates taking Unit 2592 investigate their chosen subject, collect and evaluate source material, and read and make notes in the same way as those who have proposed their own question for Unit 2592. The same regulations also apply to completing the investigation and submitting it for external marking. Advice on 'customising' these questions is given in the Teacher Support and Coursework Guidance Volume 2.

Candidates taking Unit 2593, however, do not write up their essay. Instead, they should draft an essay plan and write out their bibliography, taking both with them into the examination along with their research notes and any books they intend to use.

6.3.3 Unit 2593 – Open Book examination

Notes and books may be taken into the examination by each candidate. There are no restrictions on the quantity, but candidates should be briefed on the limited time they have and thus the wisdom of disciplined preparation:

- not taking too many books and files into the examination (likely to tempt them into spending too much time thumbing through them);
- before the examination, organising notes into a readily useable order;
- before the examination, planning the essay's structure;
- before the examination, noting the location within books/files of source material or quotations to be used, and checking books wanted will actually be available—or photocopying parts of those books to take into the exam;
- before the examination, preparing their bibliography—this can then be attached with a tag to the exam answer booklet.

Centres need to ensure that sufficient table space is available to candidates for laying out the various kinds of materials they will need.

A bibliography is required, but footnotes for all quotations are optional. Essays are marked externally by OCR. The same generic mark schemes is used for both Unit 2592 and Unit 2593, with due allowance for a shorter piece of work which cannot, therefore, offer the same degree of supporting evidence or range of source material used. Nevertheless, the quality of analysis and evaluation expected for Unit 2593 is exactly the same as that required for Unit 2592. Unit 2593 essays have to be hand-written in an exam answer booklet.

6.4 The assessment of coursework

6.4.1 The relation of coursework to syllabus assessment objectives: Q3QW

Unit 2592 or Unit 2593 is worth 15% of each candidate's final A Level mark. This is distributed amongst the assessment objectives (AO) as follows:

AO1a	(recall, selection, deployment, communication of historical knowledge)	4%
AO1b	(present historical explanations; conceptual understanding; substantiated judgement)	4%
AO2	(interpret, evaluate and use a range of source material; explain and evaluate interpretations)	7%

The importance of the use, interpretation and evaluation of source material (primary and/or secondary) is reflected in the weight attached to AO2.

The scheme of assessment can be found in the published mark scheme.

6.4.2 Independent Investigation marking

All Investigations (Units 2592 and 2593) are externally marked by OCR examiners according to the generic mark bands (already circulated to Centres in the specimen materials).

Examiners assess which level of response in the generic mark bands best reflects the qualities present in most of the answer. An answer is **not** expected to demonstrate all of the descriptions given for a particular level in order to qualify for a particular band.

Since candidates who enter Unit 2592 have had more time to write their essay than those who attempt written answers under the examination conditions of Unit 2593, the following points of difference are applied to the application of the generic mark bands:

- While the broad requirements of the generic mark bands are applied to both forms of assessment in the same way, levels in Unit 2593 are awarded on the basis of fewer examples and less supporting detail than in Unit 2592.

The qualities of evaluation, analysis and English required in both Unit 2592 and Unit 2593 essays are, however, identical.

Essays which show no evidence of AO2 may not be given a mark in Band A, however good the overall analysis and evaluation.

7 OCR Contacts

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