

OxfordAQA

International GCSE

History (9245)

Switching guide

Switching from Pearson Edexcel International or Cambridge International Examinations to OxfordAQA Examinations

For this new International GCSE History specification, OxfordAQA has incorporated new ideas and new approaches to learning to make it appropriate and engaging for international schools.

We have designed a specification that addresses different aspects of the past, so that students can engage with key issues such as international conflict and conciliation, understand what drives change, and explore how the past influences the present. The specification incorporates international relations, the history of selected societies and thematic studies, and there is a focus on experience and contributions of different individuals and groups of people and the diversity of human experience.

We've worked with teachers and subject experts to include not only popular and well-established topics, but also some exciting new topics for today's world which will resonate with students, helping them gain new insights into the world around them. Our GCSE will provide choice and flexibility and enable you to teach the history you want to teach, equipping your students with essential skills and prepare them for further study.

Summary of differences

Specification Content

- Chronological and thematic scope varies: Cambridge focuses on 19th–20th century world history; Edexcel includes global topics from 1780–2012; OxfordAQA emphasises 20th-century international relations plus long-term thematic studies (e.g. medicine or technology from c.800), and includes more of a focus on social, cultural and economic history in our Studies in Change on Paper 2.
- Choice structure differs: Cambridge has two fixed Core options (A or B) and five depth studies; Edexcel has no prohibited combinations and a range of modern world topics; OxfordAQA has structured option blocks, also with no prohibited combinations.

Assessment Structure and Objectives

- Number of papers: Cambridge uses three components (Paper 1, Paper 2, and either Coursework or Paper 4). Edexcel and OxfordAQA use two papers only.
- Source-based assessment: Cambridge Paper 2 is entirely source-based; Edexcel mixes source skills and essay skills across Paper 2; OxfordAQA Paper 1 Section A contains a mixture of pre-released sources + unseen sources.
- Non-exam assessment (NEA) availability: Cambridge allows optional coursework/ NEA (Component 3); Edexcel and OxfordAQA are 100% exam-only
- Assessment Objective weighting: Cambridge heavily weights AO2 (45%) and AO3 in Paper 2 (80%); Edexcel balances AO1/AO2/AO3 more evenly across papers; OxfordAQA splits AO3 into one section only (Paper 1 Section A) with AO1/AO2 dominating the rest.

OxfordAQA specification (9245)	Cambridge International Examinations specification (0470)	Pearson (4HI1)
Overall structure		
<p>Paper 1 – International Relations depth studies: conflict and peace in the 20th Century</p> <p>Section A Students will study one of following two optional depth studies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peacemaking and the League of Nations, c1918 – 1939 <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crises of the Cold War, 1960-1975 <p>Section B Students will study one of the following four optional depth studies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Origins of the First World War c1890-1915 <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hitler’s Foreign Policy and the origins of the Second World War, 1933-41 <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The origins and development of the Cold War, 1945-1960 <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Détente and the collapse of communism, 1969-1991 	<p>Paper 1: Structured questions</p> <p>Section A Students will study one of the two core options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option A: The nineteenth century: the development of modern nation states, 1848–1914 • Option B: The twentieth century: international relations since 1919 <p>Section B Students will study one of the following depth studies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A The First World War, 1914–18 • B Germany, 1918–45 • C Russia, 1905–41 • D The United States, 1919–41 • E The Second World War in Europe and the Asia–Pacific, 1939–c.1945 	<p>Paper 1: Depth Studies Students must study at least two depth studies from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 The French Revolution, c1780–99 • 2 Development of a nation: unification of Italy, 1848–70 • 3 Germany: development of dictatorship, 1918–45 • 4 Colonial rule and the nationalist challenge in India, 1919–47 • 5 Dictatorship and conflict in the 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 the end of apartheid, 1948–94.

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<p>Paper 2 – Studies in change Section A Students will study one of the following three optional studies in change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life in Germany, 1919-1949 <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life in Russia and the USSR, 1914-1953 <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life in the USA, 1919-1968 <p>Section B Students will study one of the following two optional thematic studies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology and change, c800-present day <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medicine and change, c800-present day 	<p>Paper 2: Document questions Students will answer one question on one prescribed topic from one of the two core options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option A: The nineteenth century: the development of modern nation states, 1848–1914 • Option B: The twentieth century: international relations since 1919 <p>Students then take either:</p> <p>Component 3: Coursework Students produce one piece of extended writing based on a depth study listed in Paper 1 Section B above or a depth study devised by the centre.</p> <p>or</p> <p>Paper 4: Alternative to Coursework Students will answer one question on a depth study list in Paper 1 Section B above.</p>	<p>Paper 2 Investigation and Breadth Studies Students must study one historical investigation from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>Students must study one breadth study in change from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B1 America: from new nation to divided union, 1783–1877 • B2 Changes in medicine, c1848–c1948 • B3 Japan in transformation, 1853–1945 • B4 China: conflict, crisis and change, 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 The Middle East: conflict, crisis and change, 1917–2012 • B8 Diversity, rights and equality in Britain, 1914–2010.

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Paper-by-paper breakdown		
<p>Assessment overview Two externally assessed written examinations.</p> <p>Paper 1 Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes, 60 marks, 50% of GCSE</p> <p>Externally assessed</p> <p>Two compulsory sections</p> <p>Section A (30 marks) Four questions, focusing on a mixture of unseen and pre-released sources (AO3).</p> <p>Pre-released booklet of primary and secondary sources for Section A will be made available on 1 February for the May/June series and 1 July for the October/November series.</p>	<p>Assessment overview Either Two externally assessed written examinations and one piece of coursework. or Three externally assessed written examinations.</p> <p>Paper 1 Written exam: 2 hours, 60 marks, 40% of iGCSE</p> <p>Externally assessed</p> <p>Students answer two questions from Section A (Core content) and one question from Section B (Depth studies).</p> <p>All questions are in the form of structured essays, split into three parts: (a), (b) and (c).</p>	<p>Assessment overview Two externally assessed written examinations.</p> <p>Paper 1 Written exam: 1 hour and 30 minutes, 60 marks, 50% of iGCSE</p> <p>Externally assessed</p> <p>Students answer two questions, one on each of the depth studies they have studied.</p> <p>A mixture of extended writing and essay-based questions.</p>

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<p>Section B (30 marks) Four questions, consisting of short and extended response questions (AO1/ AO2).</p> <p>Paper 2 Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes, 60 marks, 50% of GCSE</p> <p>Externally assessed</p> <p>Two compulsory sections</p> <p>Section A (30 marks) Four questions, consisting of short and extended response questions (AO1/ AO2).</p> <p>Section B (30 marks) Four questions, consisting of short and extended response questions (AO1/ AO2).</p>	<p>Paper 2 Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes, 40 marks, 30% of iGCSE</p> <p>Externally assessed</p> <p>Students answer one question on one prescribed topic taken from Section A (Core content).</p> <p>Students are presented with a range of source materials relating to each prescribed topic.</p> <p>The prescribed topics change in each exam series.</p> <p>Either Component 3: Coursework One piece of extended writing of up to 2000 words in length, 40 marks, 30% of iGCSE</p> <p>Students produce one piece of extended writing based on a depth study from the</p>	<p>Paper 2 Written exam: 1 hour and 30 minutes 60 marks, 50% of iGCSE</p> <p>Externally assessed</p> <p>Students answer two questions, one question on their historical investigation and one question on their breadth study in change.</p> <p>A mixture of extended writing and essay-based questions.</p>

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	<p>syllabus or a depth study devised by the centre</p> <p>Internally assessed and externally moderated</p> <p>or</p> <p>Paper 4 Written exam: 1 hour, 40 marks, 30% of iGCSE</p> <p>Externally assessed</p> <p>Students answer one question on a depth study.</p> <p>Question is in the form of structured essays, split into two parts: (a) and (b).</p>	

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Assessment objectives		
<p>AO1 (37.5%) Recall, select and communicate their knowledge and understanding of history.</p> <p>AO2 (37.5%) Demonstrate their understanding of the past through explanation, analysis and evaluation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • key concepts such as causation, consequence, and change within an historical context • key features and characteristics of the periods studied and the relationships between them. <p>AO3 (25%) Understand, analyse and evaluate, in the context of historical events studied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a range of primary and secondary source material as part of an historical enquiry • how aspects of the past have been interpreted and represented in different ways as part of an historical enquiry. 	<p>AO1 (30%) An ability to recall, select, organise and deploy knowledge of the syllabus content.</p> <p>AO2 (45%) An ability to construct historical explanations using an understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cause and consequence, change and continuity, similarity and difference • the motives, emotions, intentions and beliefs of people in the past. <p>AO3 (25%) An ability to understand, interpret, evaluate and use a range of sources as evidence, in their historical context.</p>	<p>AO1 (34%) Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key features and characteristics of the periods studied.</p> <p>AO2 (36%) Explain, analyse and make judgements about historical events and periods studied using second-order historical concepts.</p> <p>AO3 (15%) Use a range of source material to comprehend, interpret and cross-refer sources.</p> <p>AO4 (15%) Analyse and evaluate historical interpretations in the context of historical events studied.</p>

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Topic by topic comparison		
<i>Spec reference and title</i>	<i>Description of differences</i>	<i>Description of differences</i>
3.1.1.1 Peacemaking and the League of Nations, c1918 – 1939	<p>Key Questions 1 and 2 from Core Content Option B on the <i>The twentieth century: international relations from 1919</i> broadly align with this topic.</p> <p>However, the Cambridge specification focuses solely on the Treaty of Versailles, whereas the OxfordAQA specification also includes references to the other treaties arising from the Paris Peace Conference. The OxfordAQA specification also includes reference to the period between 1937-1939, which is not covered in the Cambridge specification</p>	<p>Paper 2 B2 <i>The changing role of international organisations: the league and the UN, 1919–c2011</i> contains some common content with this topic.</p> <p>The specification does not include a detailed examination of the Paris Peace conference including the Treaty of Versailles.</p>
3.1.1.2 Crises of the Cold War, 1960-1975	<p>The content for Key Question 4 from Core Content Option B on the <i>The twentieth century: international relations from 1919</i> overlaps with this topic. There is also some overlap with Key Question 6 in relation to Czechoslovakia (1968) and the Berlin Wall.</p> <p>The OxfordAQA specification includes content on the U2 Crisis and the space and arms race. These are not explicitly mentioned in the Cambridge specification.</p>	<p>Most of the content for this topic is covered in a number of different studies in the Pearson specification, though no one study covers all the content.</p> <p>Paper 1 - 6 <i>A World Divided: superpower relations, 1943-72</i> covers content relating the the U2 incident (1960), the construction of the Berlin Wall, events in Czechoslovakia in 1968 and the space race and arms race.</p>

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		<p>Paper 2 A5 <i>East Germany, 1958-90</i> also covers some of the specified content relating to the construction of the Berlin Wall.</p> <p>Paper 2 A4 <i>The Vietnam Conflict, 1945–75</i> covers content relating to the conflict in Vietnam.</p> <p>There is also some reference to the arms race in this period in Paper 2 B6 <i>the changing nature of warfare and international conflict, 1919–2011</i>.</p>
3.1.2.1 The Origins of the First World War c1890-1915	<p>Key Question 6 from Core Content Option A on the <i>The nineteenth century: the development of modern nation states, 1848-1914</i> broadly aligns with this topic.</p> <p>However, the OxfordAQA specification includes references to events up to 1915, whereas Key Question 6 in the above topic in the Cambridge specification ends with the outbreak of war in 1914.</p> <p>The early part of the First World War is covered in <i>Depth Study A: The First World War, 1914-18</i></p>	<p>The content for Paper 2 A1 <i>The origins and course of the First World War, 1905-18</i>, overlaps with this topic.</p> <p>The period covering c1890-1904 is not explicitly mentioned in the Pearson specification.</p>
3.1.2.2 Hitler's Foreign Policy and the origins of the Second World War, 1933-41	Key Question 3 from Core Content Option B on <i>The twentieth century: international relations from 1919</i> broadly aligns with this	The content of this topic contains some common content with section 2 of the Pearson study Paper 2 B5 <i>the changing role</i>

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	<p>topic, while there is also some common in <i>Depth Study B, Germany 1918-45</i>.</p> <p>However, the OxfordAQA specification covers the development of the conflict up to 1941. While the chronology of Key Question 3 ends in 1939 and does not cover this period, <i>Depth study E: The Second World War in Europe and the Asia-Pacific, 1939-c.1945</i> does.</p>	<p><i>of international organisations: the league and the UN, 1919-c2011</i>.</p> <p>There are also some references to the content of this topic in Paper 1 3 <i>Germany: development of dictatorship, 1918-45</i>, and Paper 2 B6 <i>The changing nature of warfare and international conflict</i>.</p>
3.1.2.3 The origins and development of the Cold War, 1945-1960	Key Questions 4 and 5 from Core Content Option B on <i>The twentieth century: international relations from 1919</i> broadly align with this topic.	<p>Sections 1-3 of the specification content for Paper 1 - 6 <i>A World Divided: superpower relations, 1943-72</i> broadly aligns with the content of this option.</p> <p>Paper 2 A4 <i>The Vietnam Conflict, 1945–75</i> and Paper 2 B4 <i>China: conflict, crisis and change, 1900-89</i> also covers some of the specified content relating to the significance of events in Asia.</p>
3.1.2.4 Détente and the collapse of communism, c1969-1991	<p>Key Question 6 from Core Content Option B on the <i>twentieth century: international relations from 1919</i> contains some common content with this topic, particularly in relation to Solidarity in Poland and the role of Gorbachev.</p> <p>The events that drove Détente in the 1970s, and the reasons why it collapsed in late 1970s/ early 1980s are included in the OxfordAQA specification but not explicitly</p>	<p>Sections 6 of the specification content on Paper 1 - 6 <i>A World Divided: superpower relations, 1943-72</i> contains some content relating to the early years of Détente.</p> <p>Paper 2 A5 <i>East Germany, 1958-90</i> also covers some of the specified content relating to the role of Gorbachev and events in East Germany in the late 1980s.</p>

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	mentioned in the Cambridge specification. Also, the period 1990-91 is not included in the Cambridge specification.	
3.2.1.1 Life in Germany, 1919-1949	<p><i>Depth study B: Germany, 1918-45</i> broadly aligns with this topic.</p> <p>The OxfordAQA specification includes more explicit reference to the experiences of different groups of people in Weimar Germany and on issues of culture and the economy. The end of the Nazi regime and the early years of the post war period up to 1949 are not covered in the Cambridge specification.</p>	<p>Paper 1 3 <i>Germany: development of a dictatorship</i> broadly aligns with this study.</p> <p>The OxfordAQA specification includes more explicit reference to the experiences of different groups of people in Weimar Germany and on issues of culture and the economy. The end of the Nazi regime and the early years of the post war period up to 1949 are not covered in the Cambridge specification.</p>
3.2.1.2 Life in Russia and the USSR, 1914-1953	<p><i>Depth study C: Russia, 1905-41</i> broadly aligns with this topic, though with some important differences.</p> <p>The OxfordAQA specification includes more explicit reference to the experiences of different groups of people in Tsarist Russia. The period of the 'Great Patriotic War' and the final years of Stalinism from 1941-1953 are not covered in the Cambridge specification.</p>	<p>Most of the content for this topic is covered in a number of different studies in the Pearson specification, though no one study covers all the content.</p> <p>Paper 2 A2 <i>Russia and the Soviet Union, 1905-24</i> overlaps with most of the content with Section 1 of the OxfordAQA topic 'From Tsardom to Communism: Russia, 1914-1924'. However, the OxfordAQA specification includes more explicit reference to the experiences of different groups of people in Tsarist Russia.</p> <p>Paper 1 5 <i>Dictatorship and conflict in the USSR, 1924-53</i> is broadly aligned with the</p>

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		final two sections of the OxfordAQA specification.
3.2.1.3 Life in the USA, 1919-1968	<p>Depth study D: The United States, 1919-41 broadly aligns with this topic, though with some important differences.</p> <p>The period of the Second World War, its impact and the post-war period up to 1968 is not covered in the Cambridge specification.</p>	<p>Most of the content for this topic is covered in a number of different studies in the Pearson specification, though no one study covers all the content.</p> <p>Paper 2 A3 <i>The USA, 1918-41</i> broadly aligns with sections 1 and 2 of the OxfordAQA specification that focuses on American people and the 'Boom' of the 1920s and American's experiences of the Depression and New deal, 1929-45.</p> <p>Paper 1 7 <i>A divided union: civil rights in the USA, 1945-74</i> broadly aligns with section 3 of the OxfordAQA specification that focuses on Post-war America, 1945-68</p>
3.2.2.1 Technology and change, c800-present day	This is not covered in the Cambridge specification.	This is not covered in the Pearson specification.
3.2.2.2 Medicine and change, c800-present day	This is not covered in the Cambridge specification.	<p>Paper 2 B2 <i>Changes in medicine, c1948-c1948</i> contains some overlap with the OxfordAQA specification sections entitled 19th Century Medical Advances and The Fight Against Disease in the 20th Century.</p> <p>The OxfordAQA content relating to Medieval Islamic Medicine, Epidemic in the pre-modern era, a Modern Medical Revolution from 1880-</p>

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		present, and Global Public Health from 1850-present is not covered in the Pearson specification.