



Draft Senior Secondary Australian Curriculum Ancient History and Modern History

**Consultation Report
September 2012**

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Board of Studies NSW
GPO Box 5300
Sydney NSW 2001
Australia

Phone: (02) 9367 8111
Fax: (02) 9367 8484
Internet: www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au

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1 Executive summary

Introduction

The overall strand structures of the Australian curriculum, consisting of historical knowledge and understanding and historical skills, are appropriate for both Ancient and Modern History. Many topics are relevant and engaging. The opportunity to study four ancient civilisations and the emphasis on both written and archaeological evidence in Ancient History is welcomed. However, some topics are too challenging conceptually for Year 11 students and do not cater for the full range of student abilities and interests. The proposed structure of four-semester units narrows topic choices for students. The structure is inconsistent with a three-term year. Overall, the courses burden students with an overload of content and allow insufficient time to develop relevant historical skills and concepts, with no clear chronological pathway or pattern of study connecting the four units. The development of students' historical research and communication skills is restricted by the lack of specific opportunities for research investigation.

Key matters

- The intent of the rationale is not always represented in the content of the subjects.
- The proposed structure of four-semester units narrows study choices, and the amount of content to be covered in Units 1 and 2 would be challenging for three terms in Year 11.
- There are few conceptual and chronological connections between Years 11 and 12, as the four units are designed as stand-alone semester units. Foundational content, skills and concepts are not always evident in Year 11 to prepare for later study in Year 12.
- There is no specified opportunity in either history course in Year 11 for a historical research investigation, providing opportunities for further student development in historical research and communication.
- There is an excessive amount of content in most of the unit topics and little comparability in depth and breadth of content between topics.
- Some topics are too conceptually challenging for Year 11 and do not cater for the full range of student abilities and interests.

Recommendations to ACARA

General

- Allow for more flexibility and choice of options within each unit.
- Develop a course structure that reflects a coherent sequence of chronological and conceptual development between units.
- Reconsider the amount and balance of content in many of the unit topics.
- Revise the time frames of some topics to reflect key events and developments, or the availability of primary sources.
- Allow for a historical research investigation in Year 11 to further develop historical research and communication skills.

Ancient History

- Ensure that students have the opportunity to study at least two ancient civilisations to allow coverage of the breadth of the ancient world.
- Ensure that each of the four civilisations has greater parity and representation across the four units.
- Create a gender balance in the choice of significant individuals for study. Currently in Unit 3 there are 16 males and only one female offered for study.
- Reorganise various time frames in Unit 3 to ensure that topics represent the most significant historical periods for all civilisations and also include a depth and breadth of source material, such as the Peloponnesian War and the Julio-Claudian period.

Modern History

- An introductory unit focusing on the challenging elements and specific expectations of the discipline of Modern History at Stage 6 is required. Such an approach would extend and strengthen the development of students' historical knowledge, understanding, skills and content already developed in Years 7–10. It would provide Preliminary students with an engaging foundation for Year 12.
- Consider including more 19th-century topics in Units 1 and 2 to form a chronological and conceptual foundation for later study of the 20th century.
- Include the study of a significant 20th-century individual, as such a study is accessible for a range of student abilities.
- Reduce overlaps with Stage 5 topics, including Movements of People and the Industrial Revolution.
- Propose topics that have more relevance for students today – such as Terrorism, which was included in an earlier draft.
- Reconsider the topic Towards a Globalised Economy, which is more suited to a study of economics or tertiary economic history.

2 Background information

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) released the draft senior secondary Australian curriculum for the English, Mathematics, Science and History learning areas for national consultation from 10 May until 20 July 2012.

ACARA has an established timeline that includes further curriculum refinement to follow the consultation period. It is anticipated that the final senior secondary Australian curriculum for English, Mathematics, Science and History, including content and achievement standards, will be ready for publication following Ministerial endorsement in December 2012.

The focus of the Board's consultation was on the draft senior secondary Australian curriculum content. This consultation was part of a process for developing the NSW approach to integrating the Australian curriculum content into NSW syllabuses. The Board of Studies consulted with teachers, stakeholders and the public through focus group meetings in metropolitan and regional centres and through an online survey. The Board will provide ACARA with formal NSW feedback about the quality and suitability of the curriculum.

At this stage, there is no timetable for implementation of the senior secondary Australian curriculum in NSW.

The NSW consultation consisted of:

- focus group meetings at:
 - Port Macquarie on 14 June 2012 (Port Macquarie FG)
 - Bathurst on 19 June 2012 (Bathurst FG)
 - Offices of the Board of Studies on 28 June 2012 (Stakeholder FG)
 - Offices of the Board of Studies on 17 July 2012 (Sydney FG)
- an online survey on the Board of Studies website from 8 June to 27 July 2012
- written submissions received from:
 - the NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC)
 - the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies (JBD)
 - the History Teachers' Association of NSW (HTA NSW)
 - one individual (Submission 1).

Professional associations and schooling sectors conducted a range of activities during the consultation period to inform feedback to the Board.

3 Analysis

3.1 Rationale

Overall comments

The rationale includes many appropriate elements of History, yet would benefit from a strengthened emphasis on critical literacy and reference to history as a disciplined inquiry. The claim in the rationale that there is a ‘continuum of knowledge’ is not evident in the content of each unit, as there are few chronological or conceptual links between units.

Summary of feedback	Source(s)
<p>Ancient History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rationale refers to a ‘continuum of knowledge/ understanding’, but this does not occur in the content as there is little chronological link between units and no breadth of knowledge developed throughout the course • In the latest version, ‘disciplined inquiry’ and ‘critical literacy’ have disappeared. These are important elements in a study of Ancient History. • A greater emphasis on archaeology and historiography is needed in the rationale to link with Unit 1 in particular. • The rationale is in keeping with current practices in the study of Ancient History. It is coherent and appropriate. The introduction of the Power and Authority unit is welcomed and reflects key aspects of historical study. 	<p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG, Survey (×1)</p> <p>Sydney FG, Stakeholder FG</p> <p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG</p> <p>Survey (×1)</p>
<p>Modern History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a distinct disconnection between the rationale and content, with little chronological development of the content. • Various elements of history are missing from the rationale: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the ‘discipline of history’ is mentioned in the K–10 rationale but not here – ‘19th-century history and Australia’ is missing – no specific reference is made to historical problems and issues. • The overload of content will not allow elements of the rationale to be developed. • The rationale links student learning clearly with notions of continuity and change. • The rationale is good, but does not really engage with or reflect the unit topics in Modern History. 	<p>Stakeholder FG, Survey (×1)</p> <p>Stakeholder FG</p> <p>Sydney FG</p> <p>Survey (×1)</p> <p>Survey (×1)</p>

3.2 Aims

Overall comments

Overall, the aims are appropriate, but they could be strengthened by the inclusion of ‘independent inquiry’, ‘critical thinking’ and specific reference to both archaeological and written evidence to reflect the nature of Ancient History.

Summary of feedback	Source(s)
<p>Ancient History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Independent inquiry’ has been removed from the original draft and there is no reference to critical thinking. • ‘Communication’ seems to be just tacked on. • Add ‘knowledge and understanding of historical features and issues using appropriate archaeological and written sources’. 	<p>Sydney FG, Stakeholder FG</p> <p>Port Macquarie FG</p> <p>Sydney FG, Port Macquarie FG</p>
<p>Modern History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is too much content to be able to achieve these aims. • This is an appropriate and fairly standard aim that is realistic and addresses issues of international citizenship. 	<p>Sydney FG, Survey (×2)</p> <p>Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG, Survey (×1)</p>

3.3 Organisation of content

Overall comments

Consultation feedback strongly argued that by presenting only four units, the choice of topics available for study in both Year 11 and Year 12 is limited. The courses have been designed as four distinct, stand-alone semester units, with little sequential development of foundational content, skills and concepts between units.

Summary of feedback	Source(s)
<p>Ancient History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is little sequential development of content, skills and concepts between units, particularly in Year 11 for further study in Year 12. • It will be difficult for teachers to choose topics that will provide a sequential flow of topics that is chronologically and developmentally coherent. • The four-unit structure narrows the choice of possible topics, and two-semester units in Year 11 would have difficulty fitting into a three-term year. • Inquiry questions should be added for each unit to be consistent with the K–10 History curriculum. 	<p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG, Survey (×1)</p> <p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG</p> <p>HTA, Submission 1</p>
<p>Modern History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no foundational or sequential development in content, skills or conceptual understandings from Year 11 to Year 12 to form a coherent pattern of study, eg there are no 19th-century studies to lay the basis for later 20th-century studies. • The choice of topics for Year 11 appears random, with few conceptual links. • Some topics for Year 11 do not link to any topic in Year 12, eg Revolutions in Health and Medicine, Workers’ Rights. • The four-unit structure narrows the choice of possible topics, and two-semester units in Year 11 would have difficulty fitting into a three-term year. • There is too much content in each unit. Aiming for breadth of knowledge rather than depth is at odds with the discipline of history. • The amount of content in each topic is often not consistently distributed across each unit. • It is good to see a choice of school-developed options in Unit 1. • There should be a greater emphasis on Asia. 	<p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG</p> <p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG</p> <p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG, Survey (×1)</p> <p>Sydney FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG, HTA, Survey (×3)</p> <p>Bathurst FG</p> <p>Sydney FG</p>

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Summary of feedback	Source(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A heading such as People, Power and Challenge to Authority would encourage broader thematic content in Year 11, allowing for a greater choice of topics.• There is too much focus on Australia to be a true international study of Modern History. It is not an engaging, interesting or relevant syllabus to encourage students to think about history and the way it affects us today.	Sydney FG Survey (×1)

3.4 Content descriptions

Overall comments

Consultation feedback identified significant concerns that there is little chronological or conceptual development between History units, as they have been developed as contained and discrete units. There is no opportunity for a specific historical investigation to further develop students' research and communication skills in Year 11. Suggestions were made to broaden topic choice and to include other relevant areas for study.

In Ancient History, there is little comparability and consistency between ancient civilisations and there is no requirement to study at least two ancient civilisations, creating a narrow view of the ancient world.

In Modern History, there is too much content to adequately teach skills and conceptual understandings. There is little opportunity to introduce the 19th-century foundations for later 20th-century topics, and there are inconsistencies in the amount of content for the National Studies in Unit 3. There is a clear overlap of some topics with Stage 5 History and various units are too challenging to meet the needs of the full range of student abilities and interests.

Ancient History

Summary of feedback	Source(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little consistency and comparability exists between ancient civilisations. The Ancient Near East, apart from Persia, ends in Year 11 and there is too much emphasis on Rome in Year 12. • There is no requirement to study at least two civilisations, creating a narrow view of the ancient world. 	Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG, DEC, Survey (×2)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no opportunity for a specific historical investigation in Year 11. This investigation allows students to explore and extend their historical research and communication skills. It provides an engaging preparation for students, if they choose such a pattern of study, to further their interest, experience and expertise in the subject through the HSC History Extension course. This is an ideal preparation for future tertiary studies. 	Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG, DEC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several relevant topics have been removed, such as Minoan Crete and Agrippina the Younger. These topics appeal to students and are accessible to a broad range of student ability. 	Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG, DEC, Survey (×1)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The chronology of some Society topics is based on political eras (rather than periods) that are better served in the range and availability of primary sources, eg Rome. 	Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG, DEC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The time cut-offs for some topics are meaningless, eg Persia ending in 465 BC, Greece beginning in 900 BC. Greek history in one topic ends in 600 BC and commences again in 490 BC. 	Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is good to see an emphasis on preservation and conservation. 	Port Macquarie FG

Summary of feedback	Source(s)
<p>Unit 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 11 needs to be a foundational year, providing the opportunity to develop understandings, skills and concepts for later study. • It would be difficult to develop a pathway that is chronologically and developmentally coherent. Some topics require extensive background knowledge and will not work as a ‘taster’ – the basis for foundational development of knowledge, skills and concepts. • There is little comparability between topics with regard to breadth and depth and there is too narrow a choice, eg the Groups are all biblical, the Later Roman Empire is not an event, Masada does not link with any other following topic. • Relevant topics to broaden understandings of the ancient world could include the Celts, Roman Britain, Knossos, the Trojan War, Boudicca, the terracotta warriors, Stonehenge, Persepolis, Angkor Wat, the battle of Thermopylae, the tomb of Tutankhamen, the pyramids of Giza and Lake Mungo. • The battle of Kadesh is not comparable to other topics in the complexity and depth of content and should be removed from Unit 1. • The coupling of The Hebrews and The Exodus is artificial. A topic such as The Hebrews and Early Israel is suggested. Amendments should be made to the subsequent content descriptions. • Add further examples to preservation and conservation, eg Persepolis, Teotihuacan, the terracotta warriors. Knossos is a better example here, as it was ‘reconstructed’ by Evans and is highly controversial, attracting much academic debate. Controversies and Ethical Debates would be a better title. • A study of the Dead Sea scrolls and the Qumran community or the writings of Josephus, Tacitus and Pliny the Elder would provide a richer source for Roman-era Judea than does Masada. • Including an Individual study unsupported by a relevant society or historical period study is untenable in Year 11. Individuals cannot be studied adequately in isolation, eg Cleopatra, Alexander. • The opportunity to undertake an optional study is welcomed to allow for differences in student abilities and interests. • The instructions on page 4 regarding the number of topics to study are unclear until the next page has been read. 	<p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG</p> <p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG, HTA, Survey (×2)</p> <p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG, DEC, HTA, Survey (×1)</p> <p>HTA, Survey (×1)</p> <p>JBD</p> <p>HTA, Survey (×1)</p> <p>JBD</p> <p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG</p> <p>Survey (×1)</p> <p>Sydney FG</p>

Summary of feedback	Source(s)
<p>Unit 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no continuum between Units 1 and 2 and some topics are too sophisticated for Year 11. • Reduce the content in Unit 2. Societies could be placed in Year 12 and the themes could be more fully developed, with the inclusion of a historical investigation. Themes should cover at least two civilisations and include ancient lives, women, slavery, propaganda in the ancient world, etc. • Reduce the time frame for Roman Society 753–264 BC. Sources are not extensive and the period is too long. Republican Roman Society or the 1st century BC would be more manageable for the time period and sources available. • Sparta is better placed in Year 12. The related problems of evidence and interpretation are better dealt with in Year 12, when students have gained a more sophisticated understanding of historiography. • Reconsider the use of a different dating system and anachronistic place names. • Remove Ptolemaic Egypt, as there is very little available evidence in comparison to others topics. • Many of the related dot points for Mycenae cannot be achieved, as there is little evidence for some aspects of its society. Include a statement that not all societies will have evidence for all suggested features. • Israel <i>and</i> Judah should be studied. The topic Israel 961–637 BC could be described as ‘Israel and Judah in the First Temple Period 961–586 BCE’. • Change the Mycenae topic to Bronze Age Greece 1600–1100 BC, allowing a study of both Mycenae and Minoan Crete. 	<p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG</p> <p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG, Survey (×1)</p> <p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG, HTA, Survey (×1)</p> <p>JBD</p> <p>Sydney FG</p> <p>Sydney FG, HTA, Survey (×1)</p> <p>Sydney FG, JBD</p> <p>HTA, Survey (×1)</p>
<p>Unit 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dates appear to be randomly chosen for some topics and require re-evaluation, eg Persia ends in 456 BC and Athens begins in 490 BC, omitting the study of the Ionian Revolt. • The imbalance between female and male personalities requires amendment. There is only one female to 16 males and there are too many Romans. Agrippina the Younger should be returned and Pericles should be included. There is no personality after Augustus. ‘Individuals’ should be called ‘People’, in line with the unit title. • Reconsider Augustus as an Individual study, as the sources for his life are enormous in comparison to others. 	<p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG</p> <p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG, HTA, Survey (×1)</p> <p>Sydney FG</p>

Summary of feedback	Source(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is overlap and a lack of chronology between Years 11 and 12 in some civilisations, eg Year 11 could study Ramesside Egypt and the Battle of Kadesh before Egypt's 18th Dynasty in Year 12. A more feasible chronology needs to be in place. • The New Kingdom period should extend to the end of the 18th Dynasty to ensure coverage of the post-Amarna period. • Classical Greece should replace the title Athens, as the history covers a broader range than just Athens. • The Greek colonisation period lacks the depth and breadth of available source material compared to other topics in Greek history and should be removed. • Reconsider the ancient China option, as it would be more difficult to provide resources suitable for Stage 6 students than is the case with other civilisations. • Reconsider the amount of content in the 10% Background studies. Some are huge and they are often topics in themselves, eg Persia. • A more concise and engaging title for the unit is required. • There should be a broader study of everyday life, beliefs and values to ensure a more extensive understanding of an entire society. • Move Sparta and Assyria to this unit, as they are more suited to a political study. 	<p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG</p> <p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG</p> <p>Sydney FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG</p> <p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG</p> <p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG</p> <p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Stakeholder FG</p> <p>Sydney FG, Port Macquarie FG</p> <p>DEC</p> <p>HTA</p>
<p>Unit 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major concerns were expressed about how the course will be examined. • The title is not inviting. A more engaging title could be Ancient Worlds: Sites and Sources. • There is an inconsistent amount of content across the options. Extend the Egyptian topic to the end of the 19th Dynasty to include further examples of sources, eg Deir el Medina, the tomb robberies, the strike of tomb workers, etc. • Add Herodotus and the Persian Wars to this unit. This text is one of the most significant in Ancient History. • Some topics, eg Pompeii, are well resourced, while others are less resourced and will be less likely to be studied. • Options appear limiting and wider scope for choice would be beneficial. 	<p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG</p> <p>Sydney FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG, HTA, Survey (×1)</p> <p>Sydney FG, Stakeholder FG, Survey (×1)</p> <p>HTA, Survey (×1)</p> <p>DEC</p> <p>Survey (×1)</p>

Modern History

Summary of feedback	Source(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is far too much content in the units to adequately teach skills and conceptual understandings. There is no opportunity to teach 19th-century foundations for later 20th-century studies. A clearly discernible chronological link is needed between units in order for teachers to choose a relevant pathway for students. There is little comparability in the depth and breadth of content between some topics. It is not clear whether topics are to be studied as ‘Depth’ or ‘Survey’ topics. 	<p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG, DEC, HTA, Survey (×3)</p> <p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG, Survey (×2)</p>
<p>Unit 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The topic choices are narrow and there is no chronological or thematic link between Units 1 and 2 and later units, eg the 19th and 20th centuries. A historical investigation should be included to further develop research and communication skills. This is not an engaging introduction to Modern History. The unit requires a broad introduction to source analysis, historiography and historical research through relevant case studies. Other topics could include the Indian Mutiny, Bismarck, the Meiji Restoration, the Boxer Rebellion, the fall of the Romanovs, etc. There needs to be further scope for social/cultural history. World War I could be included or a broader thematic approach could be taken. The topics included are narrowly political and Eurocentric. The various conceptual ‘isms’ and World War I could be a base for skills and concept development. The relevance of Revolutions in Health and Medicine to this history course is questionable. It is an SOSE-based topic and not pure history. It does not provide a foundation for any other topic in the later units. Include German philosophers of the Enlightenment, eg Immanuel Kant, Moses Mendelssohn. There are some interesting topics and the opportunity to create a school-developed option is welcome. 	<p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG, DEC, HTA</p> <p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG, HTA</p> <p>Sydney FG, Port Macquarie FG</p> <p>Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Survey (×1)</p> <p>Stakeholder FG, HTA</p> <p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Stakeholder FG</p> <p>JBD</p> <p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, HTA</p>
<p>Unit 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The promise and potential of this unit suffers from too many lost opportunities: there are few internal choices and there is no chronological or thematic continuum between Units 1 and 2. Some topics are more SOSE-based than pure history or overlap with subjects such as economics and business studies. 	<p>Sydney FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG, DEC, HTA</p> <p>Bathurst FG, Stakeholder FG, Survey (×2)</p>

Summary of feedback	Source(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This unit could be given more flexibility and student access with the addition of 19th-century topics that reflect the issues raised, eg Ireland, South Africa, slavery. Other 20th-century topics could include Zionism, Pan-Arabism and People Power, eg the Iranian Revolution, the Arab Spring, terrorism. • More flexibility could be created in Decolonisation if other regions/nations were included. • An addition of Apartheid and Mandela would strengthen the coverage of Africa. • Further topics on Pacific history would be appropriate. • There is no attempt to weave the Australian story into the international context, eg women, civil rights. 	<p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG, HTA, Survey (×1)</p> <p>Stakeholder FG, HTA</p> <p>Sydney FG, HTA</p> <p>HTA</p> <p>Stakeholder FG, DEC</p>
<p>Unit 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is far too great a chronological span for each of the European topics and they are not comparable to the Asian list, eg Germany 1918–1948 or Russia 1905–1948 compared to Indonesia 1942–1965. It is not clear why the date 1948 has been chosen. • Having two National Studies, including Asia, is strongly supported, but there is insufficient time to teach them as ‘Depth’ studies. • These topics will be studied not in ‘depth’, but rather as ‘surveys’. There is little opportunity to develop depth of understanding and little time to develop historical skills and concepts. • To allow for a study in depth, alternate time frames could be introduced, eg Germany either 1919–1933 or 1933–1945, the USA either 1917–1941 or 1933–1945, Russia either 1905–1928 or 1928–1953, etc. • The development of historiography is problematic: an emotive statement such as ‘Hitler was a weak dictator’ is not a balanced method of introducing issues of contestability. • A wider critique should be made about post-WWI Germany’s renunciation of the Enlightenment’s values of universal human rights and the influence and eventual widespread adoption of racist ideologies and practices, including the ‘final solution to the Jewish question’. • These topics present complex issues and events. There needs to be a more specific focus and content for each option. 	<p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG, DEC, HTA, Survey (×1)</p> <p>HTA</p> <p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG, DEC, HTA, Survey (×2)</p> <p>Sydney FG, Port Macquarie FG</p> <p>Sydney FG, Stakeholder FG, HTA</p> <p>JBD</p> <p>HTA, Survey (×1)</p>

Summary of feedback	Source(s)
<p>Unit 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This again appears to be a ‘Survey’ course and there are few conceptual links between topics. • The USA is the only national history that can be taught across each of the four units. • Studying only one topic per semester will not support a deeper understanding as much as a comparative study would achieve. • Changing World Order and Australia’s Engagement with Asia are sound topics but require less content. • The previous topic on terrorism was a worthwhile and engaging inclusion and should be reinstated. • There is some overlap with Years 9–10, eg Movements of People. Towards a Globalised Economy has far too much economic history and is more appropriate for tertiary study. • There should be an opportunity to include an in-depth study of a historical personality in the context of their times. • Movements of Peoples could be presented in a more engaging way, and Towards a Globalised Economy focuses on economic history at the expense of social and cultural history. • The Struggle for Peace in the Middle East contains content that needs to be amended. • Engagement with Asia has obvious potential, particularly if the Pacific War was fleshed out and presented as an engaging entry point into recent Asian history. • Topics that require inclusion are Indo-China, World Wars I and II, and the collapse of the USSR. 	<p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Stakeholder FG, HTA</p> <p>Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG</p> <p>DEC</p> <p>Port Macquarie FG, Survey (×1), HTA, JBD</p> <p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Stakeholder FG, HTA</p> <p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Survey (×1)</p> <p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Stakeholder FG, Survey (×1)</p> <p>HTA</p> <p>JBD</p> <p>HTA</p> <p>Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG, Survey (×1)</p>

3.5 Catering for the full range of students

Overall comments

For both Histories, the amount of content will make the development of historical skills and concepts more difficult for the full range of students. Conceptually, the Australian curriculum Modern History course is less accessible for the average student than is Ancient History.

Summary of feedback	Source(s)
<p>Ancient History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some topics that are accessible to all levels of student ability, such as Minoan Crete, have been removed. • With content overload, there is little time to develop historical skills and concepts for all ability levels. 	<p>Sydney FG, Stakeholder FG</p> <p>Sydney FG, Stakeholder FG</p>
<p>Modern History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unit 1 is far too conceptually demanding for the full range of students and would not be engaging. There is no opportunity for a historical investigation at the appropriate level for all students to further develop historical research and communication skills. • A personality study is an ideal platform for developing historical understandings for less academic students. • Content overload and demanding conceptual understandings do not allow sufficient time to develop historical skills for the full range of students. • This course is Modern History for the intellectual elite. It is beyond the reach of the average teenager. 	<p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG, HTA</p> <p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG, Stakeholder FG</p> <p>Sydney FG, Bathurst FG, Stakeholder FG, HTA</p> <p>Sydney FG</p>

3.6 General capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities

Overall comments

The overemphasis on content in both History courses has meant that historical knowledge is privileged over historical understanding and historical skills. Such an approach will impact on any effective engagement with the Australian curriculum’s general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities.

Summary of feedback	Source(s)
<p>Ancient History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The choice of options does not adequately support the study of an ancient Asian civilisation throughout. • The capabilities and priorities are sound and can be included where appropriate. • The curriculum is so disjointed that the capabilities will be difficult for students to adequately attain. 	<p>DEC</p> <p>Survey (×2)</p> <p>Survey (×1)</p>
<p>Modern History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A greater focus on Asia would be an overall benefit for Australian students. • The representation of general capabilities is quite strong and cross-curriculum priorities are adequate. • It is unachievable due to a lack of chronological and developmental links between topics. Most topics are too content heavy. • Cross-curricular links are forced. 	<p>Sydney FG</p> <p>Survey (×2)</p> <p>Survey (×1)</p> <p>Survey (×1)</p>

3.7 Other comments

The issue of how the courses would be examined for the HSC in NSW is a major concern.

Summary of feedback	Source(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be a need for support material to be developed. • The glossary needs to include more terms that are directly relevant to the study of history. • It is good to see learning outcomes, but they need more clarity and precision. Directional verbs need to show a progressive development from Year 11 to Year 12. <p>Ancient History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This curriculum would be very difficult to program for inexperienced teachers or those without a sound background in Ancient History. 	<p>Bathurst FG, Port Macquarie FG</p> <p>Bathurst FG, Stakeholder FG</p> <p>Port Macquarie FG</p> <p>Sydney FG</p>
<p>Modern History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australia’s involvement in world history would be best left for the K–10 syllabus. The senior syllabus can then focus on other struggles and issues that face the modern world. 	<p>Survey (×1)</p>