



History Extension Stage 6

Draft Writing Brief Consultation Report

February 2016

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1. Background information

The preparation of the *History Extension Stage 6 Draft Writing Brief* took into account the broad directions for the learning area, which were developed following public consultation and endorsed by BOSTES in December 2014.

BOSTES conducted consultation in Term 4, 2015 to engage stakeholders in the syllabus development process and to seek their feedback on options and proposals in the draft writing brief.

The consultation program included:

- a meeting of the Years 11–12 Board Curriculum Committee (BCC) for History on 25 November 2015
- afternoon consultation meetings (CM) at:
 - North Ryde on 26 October 2015
 - Bathurst on 27 October 2015
 - Campbelltown on 28 October 2015
 - Newcastle on 29 October 2015
 - Broken Hill on 2 November 2015
 - Manly on 4 November 2015
 - Sydney on 26 November 2015
- an online survey on the BOSTES website from 19 October to 29 November 2015
- written submissions from:
 - NSW Department of Education
 - Catholic Education Office Sydney
 - Communities of Catholic Schools – Diocese of Broken Bay
 - Association of Independent Schools of NSW
 - Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia (AHISA) Academic Committee
 - Australian Catholic University History Group
 - History Teachers Association of NSW
 - NSW Teachers Federation
 - 4 individuals.

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

Feedback from consultation was analysed and informed revisions to the draft writing brief. The final writing brief will be used to develop the draft syllabus.

2. Executive summary

The *History Extension Stage 6 Draft Writing Brief Consultation Report* provides a description of the consultation process and a summary and analysis of feedback received. The summary analysis identifies a preferred option and key matters raised, together with proposed actions for syllabus development.

The consultation report presents data and findings gathered through 48 survey responses, 12 written submissions, a Board Curriculum Committee meeting and 7 teacher meetings.

The consultation report was welcomed by respondents as an opportunity to implement adjustments to the History Extension course, in particular to reduce the amount of content and clarify course structure, as outlined in the Statement of Broad Directions.

Key matters

The key matters to emerge from the consultation included:

- Option 1, which places greater weight on the process log and entails minimal change to the essay component of the project, is the preferred option, with a review of specific aspects of the course structure, case studies and content
- the proposed case studies require review to provide an appropriate and comparable range
- the proposed key questions should provide opportunities for open-ended discussion and investigation of traditional and contemporary historical perspectives and approaches
- the nature and requirements for the History Project, in particular the role of historiography and assessment processes, should be reviewed and clarified
- the Book of Readings is no longer relevant in its current form. Other options need to be considered to support the study of historians and historiography.

Actions in response to key matters

- Option 1 will form the basis of the History Extension course. Aspects of the course structure, case studies and content will be determined through analysis of feedback during draft syllabus development.
- The list of case studies will be reviewed so they are appropriate, comparable and complement the topics in Ancient History and Modern History.
- The proposed key questions will be reviewed to align with the intentions of the course.
- The nature and requirements of the History Project, including assessment, will be clarified during development of the draft syllabus.
- Alternatives to the Book of Readings will be considered during draft syllabus development.

A summary of key matters and related actions is contained in Section 4 of this report.

3. Summary of respondents

Consultation stakeholder and teacher meetings

1 Board Curriculum Committee (BCC), 7 teacher meetings

BCC members	16	Government sector	49	Catholic sector	36
Independent sector	47	Other	19		

Online survey respondents

48 online survey responses

Respondent:					
Academic	1	Parent	0	Pre-service teacher	0
Principal	0	School executive	4	School faculty	8
Student	0	Teacher	35	Other	0
I am:					
An Aboriginal person	0	A Torres Strait Islander person	0		
An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person	0	Not an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person	48		
Sector:					
Government	14	Catholic	9		
Independent	23	Non-school based	2		
Area of NSW:					
Metropolitan	35	Regional	13		
Number of people contributing to this survey:					
1	37	2–5	9	6 or more	2

4. Key matters

Key matters	Actions
<p>Option 1, which places greater weight on the process log and entails minimal change to the essay component of the project, is the preferred option, with a review of specific aspects of the course structure, case studies and content.</p> <p>The proposed case studies require review to provide an appropriate and comparable range.</p> <p>The proposed key questions should provide opportunities for open-ended discussion and investigation of traditional and contemporary historical perspectives and approaches.</p> <p>The nature and requirements for the History Project, in particular the role of historiography and assessment processes, should be reviewed and clarified.</p> <p>The Book of Readings is no longer relevant in its current form. Other options need to be considered to support the study of historians and historiography.</p>	<p>Option 1 will form the basis of the History Extension course. Aspects of the course structure, case studies and content will be determined through analysis of feedback during draft syllabus development.</p> <p>The list of case studies will be reviewed so they are appropriate, comparable and complement the topics in Ancient History and Modern History.</p> <p>The proposed key questions will be reviewed to align with the intentions of the course.</p> <p>The nature and requirements of the History Project, including assessment, will be clarified during development of the draft syllabus.</p> <p>Alternatives to the Book of Readings will be considered during draft syllabus development.</p>

5. Analysis

5.1 Rationale

Summary

Survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the rationale describes the nature of the History Extension course, explains its purpose in the curriculum and reflects a contemporary view of the course. A small number of respondents made suggestions for minor amendments to the wording.

Feedback affirming the rationale

Feedback	Sources
A number of strengths were highlighted, including the clear and comprehensive nature of the rationale and the explicit reference to 'historiography' as a clear and positive statement about the purpose of the subject.	DoE Submission 3 Survey (x2)

Key matters and actions

Key matters	Sources	Actions
Specific aspects of the rationale need to be strengthened, for example more explicit reference to independent learning skills and historical discussion and debate.	AIS DoE Submission 3	The rationale will be reviewed for clarity and to strengthen specific aspects.

5.2 Aim

Summary

The majority of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the proposed aim provides a statement of the overall purpose of the course. A small number of respondents made suggestions for amendments to the aim.

Feedback affirming the aim

Feedback	Sources
The aim provides the overall purpose of the syllabus clearly and succinctly.	AHISA CEO Submission 3

Key matters and actions

Key matters	Sources	Actions
The proposed aim is not ambitious enough and reflects only part of the course.	CEO DoE Survey (x2)	The aim will be reviewed to better align with the intent and requirements of the course where appropriate.
The aim needs to be refined to better reflect the requirements of the course.	NSWTF Survey (x2)	

5.3 Objectives

Summary

Survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the proposed objectives define in broad terms the knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes to be developed through study in this course. A small number of respondents made suggestions for amendments to the objectives.

Feedback affirming the objectives

Feedback	Sources
The objectives are appropriate for this course.	AHISA CEO Submission 3

Key matters and actions

Key matters	Sources	Actions
<p>The objectives should be strengthened to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> include a reference to students communicating their understanding of historiography provide a closer alignment of the objectives with the rationale to define what is distinctive about the course. 	AIS DoE	Specific aspects of the objectives will be reviewed during syllabus development.

5.4 Outcomes

Summary

The majority of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the sample of outcomes is appropriate. A number of respondents commented that the complete set of outcomes is needed to give a more comprehensive view of the course and to help teachers provide more informed feedback. A small number of respondents made suggestions for amendments to the outcomes.

Feedback affirming the outcomes

Feedback	Sources
The sample of outcomes is appropriate for the course and its intent.	AHISA Survey (x1)

Key matters and actions

Key matters	Sources	Actions
Outcomes should show a stronger link to higher-order thinking.	DoE Submission 2	Outcomes will be developed during the syllabus development phase to align with the rationale and aims.
All proposed outcomes need to be presented – more detail is required.	AIS CEO NSWTF Submission 3 Survey (x3)	
The objectives and outcomes should reflect and complement the rationale and aims.	DoE NSWTF	

5.5 Diversity of learners

Summary

There were differing points of view about the diversity of learners who undertake the History Extension course and the measures appropriate to addressing their needs. Several respondents noted that the course is only for the most able students and should aim for the highest level of rigour and that the essay format is appropriate. Some respondents acknowledged a range of abilities among students and supported the proposal to reduce the length of the project and allow flexibility in the mode of presentation.

Feedback about the diversity of learners

Feedback	Sources
The inclusion of a variety of engaging case studies and the opportunity for students to choose their own project topic will help meet the needs of the diversity of learners.	Survey (x6)
The philosophical underpinnings of the course and the higher-order historical thinking that are examined throughout the course cater for the needs of the high-achieving students.	AIS Survey (x4)

Key matters and actions

Key matters	Sources	Actions
Providing options for the use of visual, audio and forms other than a formal essay for the project may provide greater scope for students to demonstrate what they know and can do.	Survey (x4)	The formal essay will be retained and other ways of meeting the diverse needs of learners will be considered within the overall course structure.
There needs to be greater opportunity for the range of students to engage with original research not limited by the present over-emphasis on historiography.	HTANSW Submissions 2, 3 Survey (x2)	The requirement to apply historiography to the History Project will be reviewed in the syllabus development phase.

5.6 Course structure and options

Summary

Option 1 was the most strongly supported option, with a number of respondents expressing the view that Option 1 retains more of the rigour of the course. Option 2 attracted less support. Some respondents commented that this option would open up the course to a wider range of student interest and ability.

The majority of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the representation of historiography is appropriate. While there was general support for the revised key questions, several respondents commented on the need to ensure that the questions promote open-ended discussion.

A number of respondents indicated that there was too much content for a 1-unit course. There were differing points of view about particular amendments within the options. Retention of the current project form and length was supported by respondents who favoured each option. Several respondents agreed that the proposed amendments to the course supported rigour and depth of study.

The majority of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the proposed case studies are contemporary and appropriate. A number of respondents offered additional suggestions.

Some respondents noted that other structures or options should be considered. Several respondents supported external assessment of the project and splitting the course into two 1-unit courses to provide opportunities for greater depth of learning.

A number of respondents suggested that the Book of Readings is outdated as a resource for teaching historiography and needs to be reconsidered.

Feedback affirming the course structure and options

Feedback	Sources
Option 1 is the most appropriate option because it retains more of the challenging components of the project.	AIS Campbelltown (CM) DoE HTANSW Manly (CM) Newcastle (CM) NSWTF Submissions 1, 2 Survey (x16)

Feedback	Sources
<p>The five proposed questions are appropriate. They:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are relevant for today's students allow students to engage with popular mediums enable investigation and analysis of historiography in a meaningful way provide greater scope to explore more contemporary representations. 	<p>AHISA CEOSYD Newcastle (CM) North Ryde (CM) Survey (x8)</p>
<p>The reduction in the number of areas of debate for each case study will assist teachers to design deeper learning experiences for students. More guidance about the scope of the debates will help teachers manage the content.</p>	<p>AHISAAIS BCC DoE NSWTF Submissions 1, 3 Survey (x10)</p>
<p>The proposed changes in Option 1 retain most of the challenging components of the project while placing greater emphasis on the process by which the project is created.</p>	<p>Survey (x7)</p>
<p>The proposed new case studies are interesting and viable, with sufficient diversity and scope to engage students.</p>	<p>CEOSYD HTANSW Survey (x2)</p>

Key matters and actions

Key matters	Sources	Actions
<p>Representation of historiography</p> <p>The question regarding the limitations of history is inappropriate and leading, and is less suitable than the other questions for promoting open-ended discussion.</p>	<p>AIS BCC DoE HTANSW North Ryde (CM) Submissions 2, 3 Survey (x6)</p>	<p>The five key questions that frame the course will be reviewed through analysis of feedback to better align with the intent of the course.</p>
<p>Manageability of content for depth of study</p> <p>The Book of Readings is outdated and its role within the course is unclear. A suggested resource list or list of historians would be more useful and manageable.</p>	<p>BCC DoE HTANSW North Ryde (CM) Submission 2 Survey (x4)</p>	<p>Other support materials will be considered to replace the Book of Readings.</p>
<p>Greater clarification is needed about the requirements of the various course components and the expectations of the course.</p>	<p>NSWTF Survey (x5)</p>	<p>The specific requirements and expectations of the course will be clarified in the syllabus development phase.</p>
<p>Amendments to the History Project</p> <p>Reducing the length of the project would reduce its importance and undermine the rigour of the course.</p>	<p>Manly (CM) Newcastle (CM) North Ryde (CM) Survey (x11)</p>	<p>Option 1 is the most strongly supported option and will form the basis for the new course.</p>

Key matters	Sources	Actions
<p>Opening up the project to forms other than an essay will present problems for comparability in marking. A formal essay shows complexity of thought which may be lost in other forms.</p>	<p>Bathurst (CM) DoE North Ryde (CM) Submission 3 Survey (x5)</p>	
<p>The amendment requiring students to 'apply historiography' to the project shifts the focus from inquiry to historiography. This may have the effect of discouraging students from undertaking original investigations.</p>	<p>Campbelltown (CM) HTANSW Submission 3 Survey (x2)</p>	<p>The requirement to apply historiography to the History Project will be removed.</p>
<p>Proposed case studies</p> <p>The proposed selection of case studies is limited and could better encompass:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous Australia • the Asia/Pacific • South America • women • medieval and early modern periods • archaeological sites • historical fiction or film • museology <p>Case studies need to be reviewed to ensure that there is scope within each topic for historical debates. It was suggested that Rameses II in particular provided limited scope.</p>	<p>AHISA AIS CCSOBB DoE HTANSW Manly (CM) Newcastle (CM) NSWTF Submissions 1, 2, 4, 6 Survey (x8)</p>	<p>A revised set of case studies will be developed through analysis of feedback with consideration of relevance, balance, comparability, manageability and opportunities to explore historiography.</p>

5.7 Assessment and reporting

Summary

A number of respondents supported the current requirements for school-based assessment and reporting. A similar number noted that assessment requirements need to be reviewed to reduce the weighting of the project and to allow for other forms of assessment.

Several respondents suggested that the project should be assessed externally, as it is in other subjects with significant project components, to help maintain standards and support comparability across diverse school settings.

A number of respondents expressed concern about the lack of clarity and guidance in the current syllabus on the requirements for the project and how it should be assessed.

Feedback affirming the information on assessment and reporting

Feedback	Sources
Current syllabus assessment requirements are working well.	AHISA Survey (x4)
The nature and duration of the current examination should be retained.	AHISA NSWTF Survey (x8)

Key matters and actions

Key matters	Sources	Actions
<p>School-based assessment and reporting</p> <p>The current weighting of the project needs to be reduced. It is restrictive and makes it difficult to implement other forms of assessment.</p>	CCSOBB Survey (x5)	The weightings of course components will be reviewed in the development of the draft syllabus and assessment specifications.
The project should be assessed externally to ensure comparability.	BCC NSWTF Survey (x11)	The History Project will continue to be assessed internally. Additional guidance to support assessment of the project will be considered in the development of support materials.
<p>Clearer guidelines are needed about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the requirements of the project the features of appropriate topics the assessment of the project. <p>This will help ensure consistent standards of assessment and reporting across schools.</p>	AHISA AIS Submission 1 Survey (x4)	

Key matters	Sources	Actions
There needs to be a better balance between focusing on the contestable nature of history as a discipline and the role of historians in examination questions.	AIS HTANSW	Examination specifications will be reviewed in the syllabus development phase.

5.8 Other comments

Summary

The majority of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the draft writing brief provides a sound basis for the development of the draft syllabus. A number of respondents commented that further detail is required to clarify syllabus requirements.

Feedback affirming the draft writing brief

Feedback	Sources
The proposed changes will maintain the challenge, engagement of students and rigour of the course while also implementing some necessary adjustments.	HTANSW Submissions 3, 4 Survey (x3)

Key matters and actions

Key matters	Sources	Actions
<p>Allocation of hours</p> <p>The allocation of teaching hours to the three components of the course, in particular to the project, could be misleading.</p>	Survey (x3)	The allocation of teaching hours will be reviewed in the syllabus development phase.
<p>Other structures or options</p> <p>The project should be externally assessed in the same manner as the PIP in Society and Culture and the English Extension 2 course. This would help maintain standards and consistency.</p>	HTANSW Survey (x1)	History Extension will continue to be offered as a 1-unit Year 12 course. The History Project will continue to be assessed internally.
<p>Splitting the course into two 1-unit courses would help to provide opportunities for greater depth of study. Options could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension 1 to deal with theories of historiography and the case study, Extension 2 focusing on the project • Extending the Extension course into Year 11. 	AIS Manly (CM) North Ryde (CM) Survey (x6)	Additional guidance to support the teaching of the course and the assessment of the project will be considered in the development of support materials.

6. Quantitative analysis of survey responses

Note: Due to rounding, some percentages may not total 100%.

Survey Item	Number of responses	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Yes	No
Rationale							
1. The proposed rationale describes the nature of the course in broad terms and explains its purpose in the curriculum.	44	20%	80%	0%	0%		
2. The proposed rationale reflects a contemporary view of the course.	44	20%	80%	0%	0%		
Aim							
3. The proposed aim provides a statement of the overall purpose of the syllabus.	43	16%	77%	7%	0%		
Objectives							
4. The proposed objectives define in broad terms the knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes to be developed through study in this course.	43	16%	84%	0%	0%		
Outcomes							
5. The sample of outcomes is appropriate.	43	19%	74%	5%	2%		
Course structure and options							
6. Option 1 is preferred.	24					69%	
7. Option 2 is preferred.	11					31%	
8. The representation of historiography is appropriate.	37	30%	46%	24%	0%		
9. The amendments to the course support manageability of content for depth of study.	38	21%	58%	18%	3%		
10. The amendments to the History project provide sufficient flexibility while maintaining the rigour of the course.	36	17%	47%	22%	14%		
11. The proposed case studies are contemporary and appropriate.	37	24%	57%	19%	0%		
12. Is there another structure or option BOSTES should consider?	35					57%	43%

Survey Item	Number of responses	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Yes	No
General 13. The draft writing brief provides a sound basis for developing the final Writing brief, which is the blueprint for the development of the draft syllabus.	38	16%	74%	5%	5%		

7. Respondents

7.1 Consultation meetings

Afternoon consultation meetings (code: CM)

Location	Date (2015)	Total
North Ryde	26 October	55
Bathurst	27 October	16
Campbelltown	28 October	28
Newcastle	29 October	15
Broken Hill	2 November	4
Manly	4 November	19
Sydney	26 November	14

Board Curriculum Committee consultation meeting at the BOSTES on 25 November 2015 (code: BCC)

Name	Organisation
Mr Denis Fitzgerald	Chair
Associate Professor Tim Allender	NSW/Territories Committee of Chairs of Academic Boards/Senates
Ms Carly-Jane Boreland	NSW Teachers Federation
Dr Paddy Cavanagh	Aboriginal Education Consultative Group
Mr James Gersbach	NSW/ACT Independent Education Union
Mr Alex Glasgow	NSW Department of Education
Ms Melissa Knudson	NSW Department of Industry – TAFE
Mr Dennis Lendon	Professional Teachers' Council NSW
Ms Lynn McKinnon	Council of Catholic School Parents, NSW
Mr Piers Parbury	NSW Parents' Council
Professor Penny Russell	NSW/Territories Committee of Chairs of Academic Boards/Senates
Ms Paula Stott	Catholic Education Commission NSW
Mr Terence Timms	Federation of Parents and Citizens' Associations NSW
Mr Carlo Tutto cuore	Association of Independent Schools of NSW
Ms Margaret Vos	NSW Teachers Federation
Mr Peter Wilson	NSW Department of Education

7.2 Written submissions

Organisations, groups and individuals	Code
Association of Independent Schools of NSW	AIS
Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia (AHISA) Academic Committee	Submission 1
Australian Catholic University History Group	Submission 2
Catholic Education Office Sydney	CEOSYD
Communities of Catholic Schools – Diocese of Broken Bay	CCSOBB
History Teachers' Association of NSW	HTANSW
NSW Department of Education	DoE
NSW Teachers Federation	NSWTF
Individual Respondent	Submission 3
Individual Respondent	Submission 4
Individual Respondent	Submission 5
Individual Respondent	Submission 6