



# **History Extension Senior Years**

## **Writing Brief**

**February 2016**

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## 1. Introduction

In 2014, the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES) commenced a review of NSW senior secondary syllabuses for English, Mathematics, Science and History learning areas to determine directions for the incorporation of the senior secondary Australian curriculum. BOSTES conducted consultation in August and September 2014 on proposed directions outlined in [NSW Senior Secondary Review & Evaluation: English, Mathematics, Science and History](#).

The broad directions for each learning area, developed following consultation, were endorsed by BOSTES in December 2014 and are available in Appendix I of this writing brief.

The development of the *History Extension Senior Years Writing Brief* takes account of the broad directions and feedback gathered through consultation conducted in October and November 2015. Option 1, which placed greater weight on the process log and entailed minimal change to the essay component of the project, was considered to be the most appropriate option.

The purpose of the writing brief is to inform the directions for draft syllabus development. The writing brief is structured according to the elements of a Senior Years syllabus. Each element includes proposed actions and key considerations for writers in the writing of the draft syllabus. These elements are:

- Rationale
- The place of the History Extension Senior Years syllabus in the K–12 curriculum
- Aim
- Objectives
- Outcomes
- Course structure
- Content, including how Australian curriculum content may be incorporated
- Glossary.

The draft syllabus package will include the elements of a syllabus and Australian curriculum content identified with codes, learning across the curriculum content identified by icons, further information about meeting the diversity of learners, and internal and external assessment.

The draft syllabus for History Extension will be developed and available for consultation during 2016.

A summary of the BOSTES syllabus development process is available at <http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabuses/syllabus-development/>.

### Diversity of learners

NSW senior secondary syllabuses will be inclusive of the learning needs of all students. The draft syllabuses will be designed to accommodate teaching approaches that support student diversity under the sections 'Students with special education needs', 'Gifted and talented students' and 'Students learning English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D)'.

For example:

## **Special education needs**

All students with special education needs are entitled to participate in and progress through the curriculum. Some students may require additional support or adjustments to teaching, learning and assessment activities. Adjustments are measures or actions taken in relation to teaching, learning and assessment that enable a student to access syllabus outcomes and content and demonstrate achievement of outcomes.

Most students with special education needs will undertake regular Board Developed courses and/or Board Endorsed courses. Students with special education needs can access Years 11 and 12 outcomes and content in a range of ways. They should choose the most appropriate courses for the HSC in keeping with their goals, interests and learning needs.

Students may engage with:

- syllabus outcomes and content with adjustments to teaching, learning and/or assessment activities
- selected outcomes and content appropriate to their learning needs.

For some students with special education needs, the Years 11–12 Life Skills outcomes and content provided in the Ancient History or Modern History Senior Years draft syllabuses may provide learning more appropriate to their individual needs.

## **Australian curriculum**

BOSTES began its syllabus development process for Stage 6 English, Mathematics, Science and History in 2014. This follows state and territory Education Ministers' endorsement of senior secondary Australian curriculum in these learning areas as the agreed and common base for development of state and territory senior secondary courses. It was also agreed that states and territories would have the flexibility to integrate the approved senior secondary Australian curriculum as appropriate. The writing brief determines how Australian curriculum content can be modified, reordered and supplemented in each learning area, while remaining compatible with the NSW Senior Years assessment and examinations structures.

## 2. History Extension key

**i** for your information

The following codes will be used in the History Extension Senior Years syllabus.

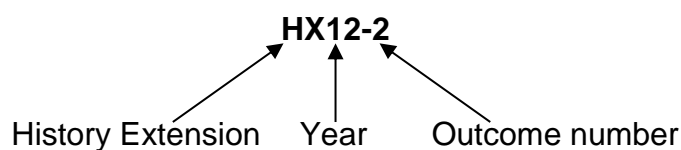
### Outcome coding

Syllabus outcomes will be coded in a consistent way. The code identifies the subject, Year and outcome number.

Years of learning will be represented by the following codes:

Year	Code
Year 12	H

In the History Extension syllabus, outcome codes indicate the subject, Year and outcome number. For example:



### Coding of the Australian curriculum content

Australian curriculum content descriptions included in the syllabus will be identified.

#### Actions for writers and key considerations

- Identify the Australian curriculum content descriptions by the Australian curriculum code.
- The code should appear in brackets at the end of each content description.

### 3. Rationale

**i** for your information

The rationale describes the distinctive nature of the subject and outlines its relationship to the contemporary world and current practice. It explains the place and purpose of the subject in the curriculum:

- why the subject exists
- the theoretical underpinnings
- what makes the subject distinctive
- why students would study the subject
- how it contributes to the purpose of the Senior Years curriculum
- how it prepares students for post-school pathways.

#### **Proposed rationale for History Extension Senior Years**

The History Extension course is about historiography. It is built on the outcomes of the Senior Years Ancient History and Modern History courses, but it is distinct from them. The main focus of the course is the nature of history and how and why historical interpretations are developed from different perspectives and approaches over time.

The History Extension course requires students to examine the way history is constructed. This involves reviewing the types of history that have been produced over time and the contexts in which they were produced. Students explore problems and issues associated with the construction of history through sampling the works of various writers, historians and other producers of history, from ancient times to the present day. Students focus on an area of debate to consider how a historian's context, methodology and purpose shape their interpretation of a person, event or issue. Students apply their understanding and skills of historical inquiry by designing and conducting their own historical investigation.

History Extension requires students to operate at higher levels of understanding. It enables them to engage with complex historiographical ideas and processes and to communicate sophisticated and coherent historical arguments about the nature and construction of history. Students work independently to plan and conduct an investigation that allows them to apply the historiographical understanding developed through the course work.

History Extension enables students to explore ideas about history and historiography in greater depth than is possible in other History Senior Years courses. It appeals to students who appreciate the intellectual challenge of grappling with an area of debate in relation to a case study, and constructing and defending a position in a reasoned and cohesive argument. History Extension also offers students the opportunity to develop their higher-order thinking skills by producing history as well as exploring and applying historiographical ideas and processes to an individual project of personal interest.

The History Extension course is designed to enhance the development of critical and reflective thinking skills essential for effective participation in work, higher learning and the broader community. It fosters the ability of students to approach complex tasks flexibly, to analyse and synthesise data from a range of sources and situations, to develop considered responses and to reflect on the processes in which they engage.


These experiences are of particular value to those students intending to undertake tertiary study, by providing an introduction to the issues of how a discipline is structured and learned. History Extension lays a foundation for such tertiary study by raising the awareness of these issues and facilitating the transfer of higher-order thinking skills from one area of study to another.

### **Actions for writers and key considerations**

- Specific aspects of the rationale need to be strengthened, for example more explicit reference to independent learning skills and historical discussion and debate.
- Review the alignment of the rationale to other areas of the draft syllabus, including the aim, objectives, outcomes and content.



#### **4. The place of the History Extension Senior Years syllabus in the K–12 curriculum**

 for your information

NSW syllabuses will include a diagram that illustrates how the syllabus relates to the learning pathways K–12. This section places the Senior Years syllabus in the K–12 curriculum as a whole.

This diagram will be included in the draft syllabus.

## 5. Aim

 for your information

In NSW syllabuses, the aim provides a statement(s) of the overall purpose of the syllabus. It indicates the general educational benefits for students from programs based on the syllabus.

The aim, objectives, outcomes and content of a syllabus are clearly linked and sequentially amplify details of the intention of the syllabus.

### **Proposed aim for History Extension Senior Years**

History Extension will enable students to evaluate the ideas and processes used by historians to produce history and to apply what they have learned to inquire into areas of historical interest with increasing independence.

### **Actions for writers and key considerations**

- The proposed aim is not ambitious enough and reflects only part of the course.
- The aim needs to be refined to better reflect the purpose of the course and the work of historians.
- Review and refine the aim to provide a holistic sense of the History Extension course that encompasses the learning entailed across the various course components.
- Review the aim to ensure consistency of length, detail and complexity with other senior syllabuses.

## 6. Objectives

**i** for your information

In NSW syllabuses, objectives provide specific statements of the intention of a syllabus. They amplify the aim and provide direction to teachers on the teaching and learning process emerging from the syllabus. They define, in broad terms, the knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes to be developed through study in the subject. They act as organisers for the intended outcomes.

### Proposed objectives for History Extension Senior Years

#### Knowledge, understanding and skills

Students:

- develop knowledge and understanding about significant historiographical ideas and processes
- design and undertake historical inquiry and communicate the results.

#### Values and attitudes

Students:

- appreciate the value of the study of history for critical interpretation of the past and present
- value the contribution of the study of history towards lifelong learning and active and informed citizenship.

#### Actions for writers and key considerations

The objectives should be strengthened to:

- 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.

## 7. Outcomes

 for your information

In NSW syllabuses, outcomes provide detail about what students are expected to achieve at the end of each Stage in relation to the objectives. They indicate the knowledge, understanding and skills expected to be gained by most students as a result of effective teaching and learning. They are derived from the objectives of the syllabus.

### Proposed outcomes for History Extension Senior Years

The following table presents a sample of some of the proposed outcomes.

<p><b>Objectives</b></p> <p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• develop knowledge and understanding about significant historiographical ideas and processes</li><li>• design and undertake historical inquiry and communicate the results</li></ul>
<p><b>HSC outcome</b></p> <p>A student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• analyses and evaluates different approaches to history and the complexity of factors that shape historical interpretations</li><li>• constructs a historical position about an area of historical inquiry and discusses and challenges other positions</li></ul>

### Actions for writers and key considerations

- Retain the four outcomes in History Extension that describe the knowledge, understanding and skills to be demonstrated.
- Ensure that objectives and outcomes reflect and complement the rationale and aims.
- Outcomes should show a stronger link to higher-order thinking.
- Ensure the outcomes align with and amplify the objectives.
- The outcomes need to reflect progression from the Senior Years outcomes developed for Ancient History and Modern History.

## 8. Course structure

**i** for your information

The following provides an outline of the Year 12 course structure for the History Extension Senior Years syllabus with indicative course hours and the arrangement of course content, along with outlining relationships between specific components and between core and options.

### Proposed course structure for History Extension Senior Years

Components	Hours	Option 1
Historiography	20	Four key questions provide a frame for investigating historiography. Students engage in the complex and intellectually demanding study of History Extension by applying significant historiographical ideas and processes, which have evolved over time, to the investigation of these key questions: <i>What are the aims and purposes of history?</i> <i>What is an historian?</i> <i>How has history been constructed, recorded and presented over time?</i> <i>Why have approaches to history changed over time?</i>
Case study – Exploring the historiography of a case study	20	Students will build their understanding of significant historiographical ideas and processes by exploring the historiography of ONE case study, with reference to three identified areas of debate and the key questions above.
Project – An individual project focusing on changing historical interpretation	20	Students will undertake an individual investigative project, focusing on changing historical interpretation. <i>Greater weight placed on the process log – the intent of the synopsis is to be represented as part of the process log, rather than as a separate component.</i> <i>Minimal change to the essay component of the project – the current length of the project to be retained.</i>

### Actions for writers and key considerations

- Review the proposed key questions to ensure they enable open-ended discussion and investigation.
- Maintain the current length of the project.
- Ensure that the description of the project enables students to undertake original investigations.

## 9. Content

**i** for your information

In NSW syllabuses for Senior Years, courses of study and educational programs are based on the outcomes of syllabuses. The content describes in more detail how the outcomes are to be interpreted and used, and the intended learning appropriate for each Year. In considering the intended learning, teachers will make decisions about the emphasis to be given to particular areas of content, and any adjustments required based on the needs, interests and abilities of their students.

### Organisation of the content

The History Extension Senior Years syllabus will be organised in the following way:

#### Exploring the historiography of ONE case study

Key areas	Proposed case studies
Ancient	The collapse of Bronze Age civilisations Cleopatra VII Athenian democracy Rome and the provinces The decline and fall of the Roman Empire The historicity of Jesus Christ
Medieval and Early Modern	The Crusades Joan of Arc Elizabeth I and the Elizabethan Age Spain and the Aztec Empire
Modern	Napoleon The Boxer Rebellion in China Western Imperialism in the 19th Century A British Prime Minister: Winston Churchill OR Margaret Thatcher Appeasement John Fitzgerald Kennedy
Australian	The Origins of the First Australians The British in Australia and Terra Nullius ( <i>an area of debate related to the legacy of Terra Nullius is to be included</i> ) Women Convicts in NSW An Australian Prime Minister: Robert Menzies OR Gough Whitlam Representations of Anzac

**Sample content page:**

**Case studies**

**Time allocation:** 20 indicative hours

Students use historical debates from ONE case study to investigate the four key historiographical questions.

**Outcomes**

A student:

- analyses and evaluates different approaches to history and the complexity of factors that shape historical interpretations
- constructs a historical position about an area of historical inquiry and discusses and challenges other positions
- communicates through detailed, well-structured texts to explain, argue, discuss, analyse and evaluate historical issues.

**Content**

**Cleopatra**

**Principal focus:** students investigate changing interpretations of the evidence relating to Cleopatra.

Students examine the approaches to history and interpretations (including recent historiography) that have resulted in historical debate in the areas of:

- constructions of Cleopatra’s identities and gender
- her role as Pharaoh
- Cleopatra’s relationship with Julius Caesar and Marc Antony

**Athenian democracy**

**Principal focus:** students investigate changing interpretations of the evidence relating to Athenian democracy.

Students examine the approaches to history and interpretations (including recent historiography) that have resulted in historical debate in the areas of:

- the origins of Athenian democracy
- the nature of Athenian democracy
- the benefits and burdens of democracy for Athens and the Athenian empire

**Joan of Arc**

**Principal focus:** students investigate changing interpretations of the evidence relating to Joan of Arc.

Students examine the approaches to history and interpretations (including recent historiography) that have resulted in historical debate in the areas of:

- Joan of Arc’s motivations and her influence on the Dauphin
- Joan of Arc’s role and impact as a military leader
- constructions of Joan of Arc’s identities and gender

### **Margaret Thatcher**

**Principal focus:** students investigate changing interpretations of the evidence relating to Margaret Thatcher.

Students examine the approaches to history and interpretations (including recent historiography) that have resulted in historical debate in the areas of:

- Thatcher and the Cold War
- the Falklands War
- leadership and gender

### **Gough Whitlam**

**Principal focus:** students investigate changing interpretations of Gough Whitlam.

Students examine the approaches to history and interpretations (including recent historiography) that have resulted in historical debate in the areas of:

- the reform agenda
- the dismissal
- the birth of a new Australia?

### **Representations of Anzac**

**Principal focus:** students investigate changing interpretations of the Anzac tradition and the various ways it is represented.

Students examine the approaches to history and interpretations (including recent historiography) that have resulted in historical debate in the areas of:

- the birth of a nation?
- the role of the ANZAC tradition in politics in Australia
- the role of ANZAC in culture in Australia.


### **Actions for writers and key considerations**

- Review the list of case studies, including their focus and scope, and identify any that may need to be reconsidered or replaced. The overall structure of the course should be maintained.
- Review the appropriateness of the titles of case studies.



- Ensure that issues of significant repetition and overlap with the Ancient History and Modern History courses are addressed in the scoping and development of case studies.
- Case studies should be reviewed to determine the scope within each for exploring historiography to ensure they are comparable.
- Identify three key areas of debate for each case study. The areas should be relevant and provide scope for investigating changing historical interpretation – this will apply to existing case studies that have been retained, and new case studies.
- Analyse and select Australian curriculum content, and modify, reorder and supplement to align with and complement draft syllabus content as appropriate.
- Align specific aspects of the draft content of each component of the course to the relevant outcomes to ensure that the required knowledge, understanding, and skills can be demonstrated.
- Appropriate and authentic opportunities to develop knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes specific to learning across the curriculum areas should be identified by icons.
- Identify, by underlining, specific terms for inclusion in and links to a glossary.

## 10. Learning across the curriculum

 for your information




NSW syllabuses provide a context within which to develop core skills, knowledge and understanding considered essential for the acquisition of effective, higher-order thinking skills that underpin successful participation in further education, work and everyday life including problem-solving, collaboration, self-management, communication and information technology skills.

BOSTES has described learning across the curriculum areas that are to be included in syllabuses. In Senior Years syllabuses, the identified areas will be embedded in the descriptions of content and identified by icons. Learning across the curriculum content, including the cross-curriculum priorities and general capabilities, assists students to achieve the broad learning outcomes defined in the BOSTES *Statement of Equity Principles*, the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians (December 2008)* and in the Australian Government's *Core Skills for Work Developmental Framework (2013)*.

Knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes derived from the learning across the curriculum areas will be included in BOSTES syllabuses, while ensuring that subject integrity is maintained.

Cross-curriculum priorities enable students to develop understanding about and address the contemporary issues they face.

The cross-curriculum priorities are:




- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures 
- Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia 
- Sustainability 

General capabilities encompass the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours to assist students to live and work successfully in the 21st century.

The general capabilities are:

- Critical and creative thinking 
- Ethical understanding 
- Information and communication technology capability 
- Intercultural understanding 
- Literacy 
- Numeracy 
- Personal and social capability 

BOSTES syllabuses include other areas identified as important learning for all students:

- Civics and citizenship 
- Difference and diversity 
- Work and enterprise 

## **Sample learning across the curriculum area for History Extension Senior Years**


### **Critical and creative thinking** ✨

Critical and creative thinking is of fundamental importance in the study of History Extension. Students analyse scholarly works to examine how history is constructed and represented. They engage in the critical interpretation of lines of argument, through a close analysis of where and how evidence is used to support a historical position. Students analyse how changing interpretations of the past have been shaped by the historian's perspective, the contexts in which historians work and changing philosophies of history. Students have opportunities to develop original investigations into significant historical questions and to employ creativity in the design of a history project. They formulate, test and modify propositions to investigate historical issues and apply skills in problem-solving to probe deeply into unanswered questions and areas of debate among historians.

### **Actions for writers and key considerations**

- For each learning across the curriculum area develop a succinct statement that describes how the subject provides opportunities to develop knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes related to the area and its relevance.

## **11. Glossary**

 for your information

One glossary will be developed for each Senior Years learning area. The glossary to be developed for the History Extension Senior Years draft syllabus will explain terms that will assist teachers in the interpretation of the subject. The glossary will be based on the NSW K–10 History glossary and Australian curriculum Senior Years History glossary.

### **Actions for writers and key considerations**

- Identify and underline words and/or terms additional to those in the K–10 History glossary in the content for inclusion in the Senior Years History glossary.

## **12. Assessment and reporting**

 for your information

BOSTES continues to promote a standards-referenced approach to assessing and reporting student achievement in NSW, and the importance of assessment for, of and as learning as essential components of quality teaching and learning.

Information on assessment and reporting for the Year 12 course will be reviewed and developed for draft syllabus consultation in 2016.

The information will include:

- mandatory components and weightings for school-based assessment of the Year 12 course
- HSC examination specifications which describe the format of the HSC examination program for History Extension.

## **13. Appendix I**

### **Broad directions from consultation**

The following broad directions for syllabus development have been informed through consultation with stakeholders. These broad directions will guide the development of the NSW History Stage 6 syllabuses.

1. In the revision of the courses, consideration be given to how the courses provide flexibility to meet the needs of all students.
2. The Ancient History core study ('Pompeii and Herculaneum') be retained, the amount of content reduced, a review of gender equity in personalities be conducted, and thematic studies options including Australian/Indigenous and Pacific archaeology and further Asian topics be considered.
3. In reviewing the content for the Modern History course, the choice of topics and the relevance of the core, included in the HSC course be revised to provide opportunities for more contemporary study and breadth of choice.
4. In the revision and development of the Ancient History and Modern History courses, the historical investigations be retained and the content reviewed to strengthen the work of the historian and to ensure an appropriate scope of content for students undertaking both courses.
5. In the revision and development of the Ancient History and Modern History courses, consideration be given to ensuring an appropriate progression between the Preliminary and HSC content.
6. Further consideration be given to the role, revision and development of the History Extension course, examination and syllabus, including a reduction in content and clarity of course structure.
7. Options for the development of outcomes and content to enable students to study both Ancient History and Modern History Life Skills courses be investigated.
8. The rationale, outcomes and content of the History Life Skills course be reviewed to better meet the needs of the students for whom the course is intended, as well as to provide an appropriate progression from Stage 5 History Life Skills outcomes and content and alignment with the regular Stage 6 History courses where appropriate.

## 14. Appendix II

### Key matters raised during draft writing brief consultation and actions

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>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 proposed case studies require review to provide an appropriate and comparable range.</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 should provide opportunities for open-ended discussion and investigation of traditional and contemporary historical perspectives and approaches.</p>	<p>The proposed key questions will be reviewed to align with the intentions of the course.</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 nature and requirements of the History Project, including assessment, will be clarified during development of the draft syllabus.</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>Alternatives to the Book of Readings will be considered during draft syllabus development.</p>