

F I N A L



GCSE Ancient History

Our Ancient History GCSE gives learners the opportunity to study some of the fascinating men and women who have helped to shape the way we see the world, and whose lives have a strong relevance to the modern world.

The new
OCR GCSE
**ANCIENT
HISTORY**

www.ocr.org.uk/ancienthistory/newgcse

What's happening to GCSEs?

OCR is offering new GCSEs for first teaching in September 2009*.

We've taken this opportunity to improve the quality of our GCSEs for teachers and students alike.

We've made improvements in three key areas: updated and relevant content, a focus on developing students' personal, learning and thinking skills, and flexible assessment, so you can choose the best learning approach for the job.

We want to make the introduction of these new GCSEs as easy for you to manage as possible.

The main changes are:

- Controlled assessment will be introduced for most subjects
- The opportunity will be taken to bring course content up to date
- Examinations should provide opportunity for extended writing and more varied question types
- All GCSEs will meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

Our approach is to provide consistency across all our GCSEs by offering the flexibility that unitised qualifications bring, allowing teaching and assessment in either a linear or unitised fashion.

*Not all GCSEs are changing. There are a few exceptions: the new Science GCSE was introduced in 2006. New English, English Literature, ICT and Maths GCSEs will be offered for first teaching in 2010.



Improving GCSE Ancient History with OCR

We've involved teachers throughout the development process, so the new specifications, support materials and schemes of work should be exactly what you need to teach OCR GCSE Ancient History. To ensure accuracy in our content, we've also consulted subject associations, professional membership groups, subject societies and other subject experts.



Our GCSE Ancient History offers:

- The chance to study strong historical characters such as Alexander the Great, Cleopatra and Hannibal
- The option to study Ancient History as a GCSE subject for the first time, through the sole provider OCR
- A short course option of only two units, but with the opportunity to top up to the full course if desired.

Making change easy

We'd like to make these changes as easy for you to manage as possible. To minimise disruption, we will:

- Guide you through the process of moving to OCR
- Bring you the latest information through our Focus on 14–19 magazine and our new website www.GCSEchanges.com
- Show you approved specifications one year ahead of first teaching, so you have plenty of preparation time
- Offer you a range of OCR support materials, including schemes of work and sample assessment materials, as we did with A Levels
- Make OCR's publisher partner resources – tailored to the new specifications – available from January 2009
- Endorse a variety of published resources, giving you a wider choice of quality support materials.

We're also running extra INSET and training courses across the UK, so now it's even easier to discover how OCR has developed its specifications.

Controlled assessment

While reviewing GCSEs, QCA looked into the coursework element of the current qualifications and decided to introduce controlled assessment as a replacement to coursework. This will address some of the issues raised in recent coursework reviews, such as plagiarism.

Controlled assessment has to be done in a supervised environment. However, if the task has a research element, the student may complete this without supervision.



The benefits of controlled assessment include:

- More straightforward marking – for most subjects, students are provided with worksheets to submit their work on
- Improved reliability and validity
- Varying levels of control, to help you manage the assessments and your time more easily
- Greater confidence in authenticating students' work as their own
- Greater ease in fitting assessments into your normal teaching programmes.

For GCSE Ancient History, controlled assessment means:

- Task setting – One controlled assessment task will be available from OCR for each of the six options within the controlled assessment unit.
- Task taking – Has been divided into two categories: research/data collection; and analysis and evaluation of findings. Research/data collection will be completed under limited supervision. Analysis and evaluation of findings will be completed under formal supervised conditions and candidates will use their research to write approximately 2,000 words in response to the task set.
- Task marking – Centres use the OCR marking criteria to mark the controlled assessment, which is then moderated by OCR.

We will review our controlled assessment tasks every year.

Flexible assessment

The assessment for the new OCR GCSEs is organised into units which can either all be taken at the end of the course in a linear fashion, or be used to complement a more unitised approach to teaching and learning. This gives you the flexibility to choose the assessment approach best suited to your centre and your students. A unitised structure gives you the flexibility to co-teach short and full courses.

We already offer assessments that are organised into units at A Level and for some existing GCSEs. For many subjects, assessments will be available twice a year. Flexible assessment means:

- You will have a choice of learning approaches – linear or unitised
- The assessment can be timed to match the point of learning within the course, making it easier for candidates to show what they know, understand and can do
- Students can re-sit a unit rather than repeat the entire assessment
- Some students are motivated by ongoing feedback and this helps them identify their learning needs
- A unitised approach makes it easier for students to stay on track with their studies and manage their time effectively
- The pressure of an 'all or nothing' assessment is removed
- Examination stress is reduced by permitting assessment over a longer period so that not all assessments are concentrated in a narrow window at the end of two years

- With a similar format to A Levels and Diplomas, GCSEs will help prepare students for the next phase of their education.

To ensure that the assessment supports the coherence of the GCSEs and there is no over-assessment, QCA has put two rules in place: 40% of the assessment must happen at the end of the course and only one re-sit of each assessment unit is allowed.

You may know 'unitised' as modular.

Unit title and description	Assessment including duration	Weighting (including short course weightings)
Unit A031: The Greeks at War <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option 1: The Greeks Defend Themselves, 499-479 BC Option 2: Alexander the Great, 356-323 BC. 	Written examination 1 hour 15 minutes	25% full course 50% short course
Unit A032: The Rise of Rome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option 1: The Origins of Rome: The Kings, 753-508 BC Option 2: Hannibal's Invasion and Defeat, 218-146 BC. 	Written examination 1 hour 15 minutes	25% full course 50% short course
Unit A033: Women in Ancient Politics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option 1: Cleopatra and her Impact on Roman Politics, 69-30 BC Option 2: Agrippina the Younger and her Influence on Roman Politics, 41-59 AD. 	Written examination 1 hour 15 minutes	25% full course 50% short course
Unit A034: Ancient Societies through the Study of Original Sources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option 1: Ancient Egypt, 3000-1000 BC Option 2: Ancient Crete: Minoan Civilisation, 2000-1400 BC Option 3: Troy and the Mycenaeans, 1450-1100 BC Option 4: Ancient Persia, 630-499 BC Option 5: The Hellenistic World, 323-133 BC Option 6: The Celts, c.500 BC-500 AD. 	Controlled assessment 2,000 word task	25% full course 50% short course

Assessment objectives

The assessment objectives are designed to reflect the non-statutory guidelines for Ancient History.

Candidates are expected to demonstrate the following in the context of the content described:

AO1

- Recall, select and organise relevant knowledge of historical events and sources.

AO2

- Demonstrate an understanding of historical events and sources.

AO3

- Interpret, evaluate and respond to historical events and sources.

Short courses

We also offer a short course in GCSE Ancient History, equivalent to half a GCSE. This offers several advantages:

- There are only two units to complete.
- Students who are interested in a particular subject, but don't have time to study a full course, have more learning options.
- Students can study a wider range of subjects.
- Timetabling for shorter courses can be easier for your centre.
- More able students can complement their studies by taking additional short courses.
- Short courses can be spread over one or two years.



OCR offers a range of support materials, developed following extensive research and consultation with teachers. We've designed them to save you time when preparing for the new specifications and to support you while teaching them.

Our support materials and events include face-to-face training courses, schemes of work that you can customise, endorsed publisher partner resources, access to teacher and examiner networks (both online and offline), plus an extensive past-papers service.

OCR's online resources include:

- E-communities – online networks of subject specialists for sharing knowledge, views and ideas
- Interchange – a completely free and secure website that helps you carry out the administrative tasks associated with examinations quickly and easily
- Past examination papers
- Marking schemes
- Subject e-alerts – for teachers who register for updates.

We offer a wide range of training courses in the UK, so you have easy access to information about our new specifications – direct from the experts. See opposite for more details.



Our Get Ready events offer a taste of the new specification. You can book your place now at www.GCSEchanges.com/keydates.asp.

Get Ready – introducing the new specification (first teaching from September 2009)*

This course is for all teachers – new and experienced – who are interested in finding out more about the new specification. It's open to you, even if you don't teach the current OCR specification.

It's a **FREE** half-day session, including refreshments, a light finger buffet and course materials, offering an overview of the new OCR specification in GCSE Ancient History. Key features include:

- A look at the new structure, content and assessment methods
- A comparison between old and new specification content
- An introduction to the support and resources available from OCR
- A summary of the benefits of choosing the new OCR specification.

Get Started – towards successful delivery of the new specification

This course will help you, whether you are a new or experienced teacher or a centre assessor who will be teaching this Ancient History specification.

It's a full-day course which will provide essential information, guidance and practical support for newly qualified teachers or teachers new to the OCR GCSE in Ancient History. It will:

- Explain the requirements of the specification
- Review the assessment criteria and their application
- Explain the requirements of the assessment process
- Review the Chief Examiner's report from the 2008 session
- Consider the collation of appropriate evidence for portfolio building
- Discuss the presentation of learner portfolios
- Review exemplar candidate work
- Offer advice on preparing learners for external assessments
- Explain the administrative procedures.

Publishing support for GCSE Ancient History teachers

To find the latest information on published resources, please visit www.ocr.org.uk/ancienthistory/newgcse and choose published resources from the right-hand menu.



www.ocr.org.uk

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