



The Historical Association
Curriculum Development Project

History

14-19

Report and Recommendations
to the Secretary of State

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(1,2005)

Georg-Eckert-Institut BS78



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THE
HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION

THE VOICE FOR HISTORY

This report is dedicated to the memory of John Fines, Robert Phillips and Martin Booth, who inspired generations of history teachers with their passionate devotion to excellence in history for young people.

The Historical Association is the 'Voice for History', bringing together and representing people who share an interest in, and love for, history. We aim to further the study, teaching and enjoyment of history at all levels: teacher and student, amateur and professional. This is achieved by:

- Encouraging wide membership, linked together at a local level by active branches
- Creating an environment which supports life-long learning
- Providing resources such as events, journals and website information which meet the evolving needs of people who share an interest in history
- Campaigning for history and representing its value to decision-makers at local and national levels.

The Association was founded in 1906, and membership is open to everyone.

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1. Preface

- 1.1 The Historical Association Curriculum Project (HACP) was set up by the Historical Association (HA) Secondary Education Committee in January 2004 with joint funding from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the Historical Association Development Fund. It has its origins in the HA's *Past Forward* conference held at the Cherwell School, Oxford in September 2002 and in the subsequent conference report. It was also set up in response to concerns about 14-19 history voiced in a number of different forums, including the Secretary of State's history focus group, the Prince of Wales's summer schools for teachers, press comment, and comments made by teachers and history educators at the *Past Forward* conference and elsewhere. An important context for the project was the controversy surrounding the issue of A and AS level results in the summer of 2002 and the inquiry into the 14-19 curriculum chaired by Professor Mike Tomlinson.

1.2 Aims

Unlike previous working groups on school history, the HACP is not, at this stage, designed to make detailed proposals about the content of a new history curriculum. What it has sought to do is to offer a critique of the current state of history 14-19 and, in line with the changes proposed by the Tomlinson committee, to make proposals about the underlying principles and philosophy which should determine the shape of history 14-19.

1.3 Consultation

To this end we have conducted a wide-ranging consultation exercise which has operated on different levels. A working group of specialists was put together from within the membership of the HA Secondary Committee. On 5-6 April 2004 a consultation conference was held with history education specialists at Churchill College, Cambridge. This was followed up by a meeting held on 26th May at the Institute of Historical Research with representatives from higher education, including the Royal Historical Society and the History in the Universities Defence Group, from museums, archives, the heritage industry and from the print and broadcast media. We were also able to make presentations and take advice from a meeting of representatives of history associations held at the offices of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) on 21 April 2004 and at the annual conference of the Schools History Project held at Trinity and All Saints College on 2-4 July 2004. We are grateful to Dan Moorhouse of schoolhistory.co.uk and John Simkin of educationforum.ipbhost.com for posting details of our consultations and inviting teachers to comment; we have derived much useful advice through this means. We are also grateful to the Association of History Teachers in Wales for their help in discussing some of the wider implications of our recommendations.

- 1.4 In the light of the issues raised through this consultation process we were able to frame two questionnaires, one aimed at teachers and one at school pupils, which were issued to all secondary schools and FE colleges affiliated to the Historical Association in September 2004. The feedback from these questionnaires forms a central basis for our report.

1.5 Rationale for the Research

- 1.5.1 The Historical Association is the Voice for History. We are independent of government and of the awarding bodies (examination boards). We represent the interests of the subject and

of its teachers, both in schools and in universities. This report therefore presents the considered response of subject specialists to the current state of our subject, our analysis of how it has developed its current strengths and weaknesses, and our recommendations for how it should develop in the future.

- 1.5.2 This report represents the first stage in what we hope will be a longer-term project of curriculum development. We aim eventually to develop a detailed model for history provision at 14-19; the review of the 14-19 curriculum carried out by Mike Tomlinson encourages the hope that there will be scope for such curriculum development in the near future. As an initial step, we proposed to the Secretary of State that we should look carefully at current provision for history 14-19, and deliver a critique with recommendations for the principles and criteria which ought to underpin the subject in the future. While we have maintained a close watch on the development of the Tomlinson proposals, it has been our aim at all stages that our recommendations should be applicable to any curricular structure that might be adopted in the future. Our work has entailed a review of current and past literature on school history, to get an overview of thinking and of the issues which have been identified in the field; at the same time we have consulted with specialists to get a range of different perspectives. Feedback from teacher meetings and websites has also helped to inform our thinking. Having identified a range of important issues, we then drew up two questionnaires to inquire further into teacher and student attitudes towards them. Since many concerns related to the detail of examination specifications, we also looked at these to see if these were borne out. In the light of all these findings, we have compiled this report.
- 1.5.3 The HA was asked to report on the position relative to history 14-19 within England. We recognise, however, that this report might raise issues relevant to the teaching of history in Wales, Northern Ireland or Scotland.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 History is a successful and popular subject in many schools, and at many levels. Further research needs to be undertaken by an appropriate body to investigate more precisely why history is more successful in some schools than in others. However, our research has revealed several areas of major concern in the current provision of history 14-19.
- 2.2 Underlying these concerns is the fundamental issue of the philosophy behind school history. Like all school subjects, history enshrines a set of values and priorities which one generation feels important enough to be imparted to the next. However, we have found that in practice the content and assessment pattern of school history is often determined by other factors. These include the need for history departments to 'sell' the subject through the options system at 14+, commercial competition between awarding bodies and between publishers, the availability of resources in schools and on the open market, and an understandable desire on the part of teachers to keep to what they are familiar with.

2.3 Statement of philosophy

At all stages, and especially at 14-19, school history should be compatible in its practices and values with the discipline, practices and values of academic history. It should encourage a love of the past, and introduce pupils to the full range of ways of studying and finding out

about it. The content of history courses 14-19 should be drawn up on clear *historical* criteria. School history should encourage a spirit of enquiry and debate, and should encourage pupils to present their ideas and findings in a wide range of different formats and media.

2.4 The Heads of the Proposals

We recommend the following points for inclusion in the history component of any curricular framework for 14-19 education that might be implemented:

- 2.4.1 History should be open to all pupils. History is an essential component of the values that underpin democratic societies, and as such should be central to the compulsory years of education. However, history's optional status in the curriculum post-14 results in most pupils dropping it. **At the very least, all pupils at 14-19 are entitled to a specifically historical education. Schools and awarding bodies should ensure that history is made freely available to, and appropriate for, pupils of all ability levels and of all ethnic backgrounds.**
- 2.4.2 Many of the problems we have found in history 14-19 arise from the way that different stages of the curriculum have been developed in isolation. **Any new structures for the 14-19 history curriculum should be planned as a coherent whole, setting clear lines of progression and continuity in content coverage, in types of work, and in assessment, from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4, and from Key Stage 4 to Key Stage 5.**
- 2.4.3 Current specifications at GCSE and AS/A level allow schools to provide students with narrow chronological choices and to repeat topics at different levels. **The national criteria for history examinations need to be amended to require specifications to include a wider range of mandatory topic areas, and to prevent over-repetition of particular topics.**
- 2.4.4 One of our most important concerns relates to the narrowness of current provision in history 14-19, especially in terms of the types of historical work and experience, and of the geographical and chronological range of the topics covered. **Any new structures for constructing the 14-19 history curriculum should give greater prominence to the importance of diversity and the need to make a genuine link between the past and present at local, national, European and global levels.**
- 2.4.5 Limited knowledge prevents many pupils from having a broad awareness of history or the ability to make historical comparisons and contrasts beyond the strict limits of their courses. **The national criteria for examinations in history need to be amended to reward positively those pupils who show competence in comparing, contrasting and making links between and across different areas of content, including areas outside the examined course.**
- 2.4.6 Many historical sources quoted and presented for analysis in history examinations are too short for meaningful work, and the questions set on them have become dull, formulaic and divorced from the context of genuine historical investigation. **The current practice of assessing sourcework in examinations should be ended. The national criteria for examinations in history need to be amended to place the analysis of historical sources in the context of historical enquiry and of centre-based assessment.**
- 2.4.7 There is no single 'history'; each account reflects its author's interpretation, and history is always made up of many contrasting and sometimes conflicting interpretations. This is often

addressed very successfully at Key Stage 3 but inconsistently and often inadequately at GCSE and at A level. **The study of different interpretations of history should be a prominent feature of 14-19 history and of its assessment.**

- 2.4.8 Different forms of historical narrative can successfully engage and motivate pupils. However, at present, narrative does not feature as an assessment objective at GCSE or AS/A level. **Further research needs to be undertaken by an appropriate body to investigate how the teaching of forms of historical narrative can help to raise standards within the subject and to engage pupils' interest.**
- 2.4.9 There are overlaps in areas of content and in competencies between history and other subjects, and between history and Key Skills. Examples might include combinations of history with citizenship, modern foreign languages, ICT and vocational studies. **Further research needs to be undertaken by an appropriate body to investigate how, and to what extent, these cross-curricular overlaps ought to be systematically incorporated into the framework of examined courses.**
- 2.4.10 None of the improvements we recommend in history 14-19 will be possible without sufficient professional training and resources for the history teachers who will carry them out. As well as covering issues of assessment, it is essential that this training should include the further development of teachers' own subject knowledge. **The Teacher Training Agency should aim for a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) entitlement for all history teachers. The development and extension of teachers' subject knowledge and expertise should be recognised as a priority within CPD.**

3. Why has school history provoked such controversy?

Twelve great battles did Arthur fight and win against the Saxons. Always in the foremost of the battle he was to be seen, in his armour of gold and blue, the figure of the Virgin upon his shield, a golden dragon and crown upon his helmet. He was so brave that no-one could stand against him, yet so careless of danger that many times he would have been killed, had it not been for the magic might of his sword Excalibur, and of his spear Ron.

And at last the Saxons were driven from the land.

H.E. Marshall *Our Island Story* (1905)

The Earl of Onslow: However, because I had read Our Island Story – by far the best history book that has ever been written – I went on to study the subject in more detail. ... That kind of heroic and, I accept, jingoistic story gave me a love of history which allowed me to fail it at Eton.

Hansard: House of Lords Debates 27 March 2000, c.584

- 3.1 School history has been the subject of public controversy on many occasions in recent years, and history teachers have sometimes been accused of a range of offences from the wilful omission of prominent national figures to an obsession with child-centred learning. Many of these accusations have been based on misunderstandings or misreadings both of current and of past practice. This section explores the roots of some of these issues.

3.2 Argument, discussion and debate are central to the discipline of history. Unlike the sciences, history seldom deals in absolute or verifiable truths. The accuracy of received versions of events, even of familiar or cherished moments of national history, is constantly being questioned or reinterpreted by historians in the light of new evidence or new thinking. There are conflicting opinions, for example, on the extent to which the defeat of the Spanish Armada was due to the efforts of the English fleet; we still do not for certain how King Harold II met his death at Hastings; even the much-criticised British generals of the First World War have received considerably more sympathetic treatment from recent historians, and this is beginning to be reflected in classroom teaching. This is as it should be; it is right and proper that schoolchildren should be introduced to the uncertainties and provisional nature of historical work. By the same token, it is appropriate that school history should itself have been the subject of discussion, debate and disagreement.

3.3 History as a school subject has its origins in the nineteenth century. Dr Arnold introduced it in the sixth form at Rugby School in the 1820s, but it took time to become established more widely. The School of Modern History at Oxford dates from 1872, and the Historical Tripos was introduced at Cambridge two years later. In both cases, teaching was dominated by the Whig tradition of historical scholarship, which traced the development of constitutional government through British, and particularly through English, history. For this reason, heavy emphasis was placed upon the history of parliament and the development of the common law; a central text was Bishop Stubbs' *Select Charters and other Illustrations of English Constitutional History*. History was included in the curriculum of elementary schools when elementary education was made compulsory in 1870, essentially as a way of fostering patriotic sentiment at a time of growing national unease and uncertainty. In 1913 one contributor to the Historical Association's journal *History* pleaded for 'a more thorough and comprehensive dissemination of the teachings of History and Patriotism'.¹ Children usually encountered history within 'readers' as a set of facts to be learnt by heart, as in this extract from a schoolbook in common use by 1900:

Q: Was Edward II a good king?

A: No, he was a weak monarch, and liked his own ease better than the welfare of his subjects, and always had favourites.

Q: Had he any children?

A: Yes – and they rebelled against him, in which they were encouraged by their mother, who was a cruel woman.

'A Simple Catechism of the History of England adapted to the capacities of Young Children', quoted in Teaching History Ministry of Education Pamphlet no.23 (London, 1952)

To be 'good' at history, therefore, was essentially to have a good memory. As the Public Schools Commissioners had put it in 1864:

To gain an elementary knowledge of History little more is required than some sustained but not very laborious efforts of memory; it may therefore be acquired easily and without any mental exercise of much value.

Quoted in C.H.K. Marten 'Some General Reflections on the Teaching of History' History 2:2 April-June 1913

3.4 Even at this early stage, however, there were those who argued that school history could do much more to stretch pupils' capabilities. Indeed, there are striking similarities between some of the practices in history teaching in the 1900s and some of the 'innovations' of the

1960s and 1970s. The 1908 Board of Education Circular 599 on the Teaching of History in Secondary Schools laid down that 'it is far more important that pupils should leave school with their eyes trained to observe the historical remains which are to be found in almost every part of England, than that they should attempt to remember the whole of the political history, much of which they cannot understand'. It specifically ruled against using written work merely 'as a test of the memory'; it warned against the dangers of content-overload; and it considered the relative merits of balancing historical outline and study in depth, of a spiral curricular model repeating topics in ever greater detail, and teaching history in reverse chronological order, working backwards from the modern. Many methods and approaches often criticised nowadays as 'trendy' or 'novel' have in fact a heritage almost as long as school history itself.

- 3.5 A noticeable feature of much early writing on history teaching is its emphasis on children working with historical source material to engage with the process of historical research and interpretation. As early as 1910 the educationalist M.W. Keatinge had argued that 'our pupils must be confronted with documents, and forced to exercise their minds upon them.'² One writer in 1913 described examining the evidence for the Gunpowder Plot and the Battle of Trafalgar with his class; the Board of Education's 1923 Pamphlet on History Teaching described research projects undertaken at a London Secondary School which appear to have been identical to modern A level Individual Studies, complete with peer-assessment.³ Similar arguments resurfaced in the 1960s and lay behind the success of the *Jackdaw* series of facsimile document collections published by Jonathan Cape.
- 3.6 Not everyone was convinced that children could handle the more advanced thinking of the historical discipline. The eminent Tudor historian Geoffrey Elton, writing in 1967, thought the process of arguing from evidence – 'the 'real' thing – academic history' too difficult for children, a point of view apparently supported by the work of the Swiss educationalist Jean Piaget, who argued that children's thinking progressed through very definite stages of development, in which the sort of deduction and construction work characteristic of history would not be possible until a child hit maturity.⁴
- 3.7 In addition, by the late 1960s school history was coming under pressure from newer social science subjects, notably sociology. Not only did the subject matter of sociology seem more relevant to modern society, but its active methodology, requiring pupils to collect and analyse data scientifically, compared favourably with the more passive learning pupils encountered in their history lessons. In 1969 Mary Price, in a celebrated article, described much school history as 'excruciatingly, dangerously dull, and what is more, of little apparent relevance to the pupils.'⁵
- 3.8 What saved school history from being squeezed off the curriculum was the work of a number of history education specialists working in the late 1960s and 1970s, which showed that children were capable of much more sophisticated thinking in their historical work than they had been given credit for. Martin Booth's seminal work *History Betrayed?* highlighted the ineffectiveness of memory tests as a reliable measure of pupils' historical ability. Work conducted into children's historical thinking by Peter Lee and his colleagues at the London Institute of Education demonstrated clearly that, when presented with historical material as the basis for questioning and enquiry, children could do much more than Elton and Piaget had allowed for.⁶
- 3.9 However, the ways in which the history teaching profession built upon this work to revitalise the subject in the classroom also marked the beginning of the modern controversy about school history. In 1971 the Historical Association published *Educational Objectives for the*

Study of History by Jeanette Coltham and John Fines which laid out for the first time a full set of objectives against which pupils' attainment in history might be assessed. It now became possible to have a much better grasp of what it meant to be 'good at history' than simply testing how much of the textbook the pupils could remember and repeat.

- 3.10 Building on this work, in 1972 the Schools Council launched its project *History 11-13*, which went on to become the basis for an O level course and for the modern Schools History Project GCSE course. The Schools Council project sought to produce a new rationale for school history based not in its subject matter, but rather in terms of the distinctive skills the study of history can help to develop. This approach became labelled, not entirely helpfully, 'New History'.

3.11 'Skills versus Content'

- 3.11.1 The difference between 'new' and 'traditional' history is often presented as a conflict between the rival claims of historical skills and historical content. Although there have been people on both sides of the debate who have tended to argue in those terms, the National Curriculum has rendered this dichotomy largely obsolete. Successive versions of National Curriculum history have pulled together a widely accepted body of content with a range of well-articulated subject-specific approaches to teaching and learning. Nevertheless, since the controversy surrounding historical skills has aroused considerable public comment, not all of it well-informed, it is worth explaining its outlines here.
- 3.11.2 It is axiomatic that the study of history can develop a range of skills, including close reading, reasoned analysis, the weighing and deployment of evidence, argument and counter-argument. This is, indeed, precisely why history is so highly prized by employers as a qualification.
- 3.11.3 Controversy surrounding historical skills has focused on three basic issues:
- the identification of the essential historical skills
 - the assessment of historical skills
 - the relative importance of historical skills and historical content
- 3.11.4 Broadly, the essential historical skills for the purposes of assessment, first at O level and CSE and later at GCSE, were identified as historical knowledge and understanding; the evaluation of historical evidence; understanding and assessment of different historical interpretations; the understanding and use of historical terms and concepts; and empathetic understanding. These skills, translated into formal assessment objectives were strongly endorsed in the 1985 HMI report on *History in the Primary and Secondary Years* and went on to form the basis of GCSE history when it was launched the following year.
- 3.11.5 The objections to these skills were based on various premises. Some thought it inappropriate to be assessing children's historical understanding in any more sophisticated way than memory tests in the first place; the assessment of historical empathy came in for particularly heavy criticism. Others objected that the emphasis on skills was deflecting attention from the coherence of historical content.
- 3.11.6 The objections to historical empathy were not without foundation. Empathy, defined as the ability to 'see' the historical past through the eyes of people at the time without hindsight or anachronism, is an essential attribute for a historian, but attempts to turn it into a measurable skill for the purposes of assessment did not prove successful. As a result,

empathy has never featured within the assessment structure for National Curriculum history; nor has it ever been an assessment objective at AS or A level.

- 3.11.7 The accusation that historical skills were promoted at the expense of historical content has provided the press with a compelling line of division between the proponents of 'new' and 'traditional' history. In fact this 'distracting dichotomy', as Christine Counsell has called it, is almost entirely bogus. At no point have those who advocate the assessment of historical skills denied or downplayed the importance of historical content. The most popular history GCSE course, Modern World History, offers a coherent course of study in mid-twentieth century history. The Schools History Project course employs different criteria for its selection of content, which can make it appear eclectic to those new to it. It seeks to develop knowledge of chronology through a long-term study in development; knowledge in depth through a case study looked at in detail; understanding of the relationship between history and the modern world through a modern world study; and an awareness of the historic environment through a local study. These criteria are certainly open to discussion or disagreement, but it does not follow that historical skills are being pursued at the expense of coherent content coverage.

3.12 The place of British history

- 3.12.1 Critics of school history have often accused teachers of neglecting British history. It needs to be recognised at the outset that the term 'British history' is open to many different interpretations. It may well be, for example, that all too often 'British' history is largely or wholly English history. Indeed, the importance and nature of British history was a central feature of the public debate which surrounded the introduction of National Curriculum history in 1990.⁷ As a result, British history units form the core of National Curriculum history. By the age of 14 most pupils will have studied the Saxons, Tudors and either the Victorians or Britain Since 1930 at Key Stage 2, mediaeval Britain, the Tudors and Stuarts, and the development of British industrial society in Key Stage 3. In addition, the Key Stage 3 unit on the twentieth century world, usually covered in Year 9, typically involves a study of the home front in Britain during each of the world wars. An important feature of these units is the study of different ways in which British history has been interpreted and represented. Bearing in mind that most pupils drop history at 14, the accusation that they have not been taught any British history does not hold water.
- 3.12.2 At GCSE the picture is slightly different. Courses in British social and economic history exist and are taken by a minority of schools. Otherwise the two most popular GCSE history courses are the Schools History Project (SHP) course and courses in Modern World History. The SHP course offers units in British history, including Elizabethan England and Victorian Britain; however, there is no obligation to take these. The more popular options cover Nazi Germany and the American West. Modern World History concentrates on the history of Germany, Russia and the USA, though some schools manage to include coverage of life in the British trenches in World War I. In 2000 it was made a requirement that GCSE students should cover an element of British history; this was usually fitted into the existing pattern of teaching with minimal change to the existing content coverage. Thus, a typical approach in Modern World History courses has been to include the home front during World War II; in SHP courses this requirement can be met through the unit on local history.
- 3.12.3 A similar requirement with regard to British history exists at A level. The traditional pattern of coverage at A level was always for students to cover one paper in British history and another in foreign, usually European, history. Despite evidence from examiners' reports that before the introduction of Curriculum 2000 schools were tending to opt increasingly for

topics in twentieth century international relations, and especially in the politics of the 1930s, our findings suggest that much of the previous pattern of coverage has been sustained, and that British history remains healthy at A level.

4. The context of this report

Quite simply, human society needs history; the sophisticated societies of our own day need a lot of history.

Arthur Marwick *The Nature of History* (1970)

4.1 History in the modern world

There is compelling evidence of strong public interest in and demand for history. History programmes on television regularly attract large audiences; their traditional documentary format has been broadened to include dramatic reconstruction and computer animation. History publishing is flourishing, both with academic works and with a new genre of popular works aimed at a wider readership, of which Mark Kurlansky's *Cod* and Giles Milton's *Nathaniel's Nutmeg* are good examples. Museums and heritage sites have seen a major expansion in their sector since the 1980s, and they play an important role in the development and diversification of the school curriculum. Particularly important recent examples include the museum of the British Empire and Commonwealth Museum in Bristol and the successful opening of Imperial War Museum North in Manchester. Black History Month has grown into a major annual feature, with events held right across the country. Local history societies continue to flourish and family history is taken up with ever greater enthusiasm by ordinary people, often with no background in the formal study of the subject.

4.2 Strengths of school history

- 4.2.1 Contrary to much press comment, history is in similarly robust health in the classroom. Despite the impact on teaching time in primary schools of the original literacy and numeracy hours, it remains a popular and well-taught subject at Key Stages 1 and 2, with high quality work being carried out on topics from British history such as the Saxons, Tudors, Victorians and life in World War II. This good work is built on successfully at Key Stage 3. The annual QCA report on curriculum and assessment in March 2004 noted that 'successive Ofsted annual reports confirm that, on the whole, the subject is well taught: the most recent reports state that "the quality of history teaching is good in just over half of primary schools and three quarters of secondary schools. There has been a significant improvement in pupils' achievement in key stage 3"⁸. There is strong evidence that the quality of historical work which pupils encounter in the primary and lower secondary classroom is generally good and can be outstanding: Ofsted itself reports that the teaching of history at Key Stage 3 is 'among the best of all subjects'.⁹ It is common for pupils to engage with source-based investigative work, to debate different perspectives on past events, to analyse different historians' interpretations, and to present their findings in well constructed written analyses. Central to the maintenance of high standards of work at this level have been the conferences and other forms of Continuing Professional Development mounted by the Historical Association, the Schools History Project, the Midlands History Forum, the History Teacher Education Network and other local and regional groups. A particularly important role was played by Christine Counsell's HA booklet *Analytical and Discursive Writing at Key Stage 3*,

which provided guidance on how to develop pupils' ability to communicate their ideas through carefully-planned and often extensive written prose.

- 4.2.2 A useful guide to the health of any subject is provided by entries for examinations. At GCSE history has recovered much ground from the low points of the 1990s.

Year	History GCSE Entries
1992	218, 279
1995	247, 929
1998	212, 832
2001	218, 695
2004	230, 688

However, this needs to be placed in the context not only of history's overall market share, but also of the undisputed fact that the overwhelming majority of pupils stop history altogether at 14. The numbers going on to A level reached such an alarming low point in the mid-1990s that the Historical Association launched a high-profile Campaign for History to try to improve the situation. Recent figures suggest some recovery, though the numbers taking history A level still fall some way short of the numbers at the start of the 1990s.

Year	History A level Entries
1992	46, 698
1995	43, 796
1998	40, 515
2001	39, 443
2004	43, 790

The introduction of AS level has seen a substantial increase in those taking the subject in Year 12, though this is not carried through to Year 13.

Year	History AS level Entries
2001	38, 701
2004	50, 650

QCA figures: see www.qca.gov.uk. Full figures are at appendix 3.

4.3 Curricular pressure on school history

- 4.3.1 Speaking to the Historical Association in 1984 the then Education Secretary, Sir Keith (later Lord) Joseph, said that history should be part of the curriculum for all pupils up to the age of 16. Although this is the norm across most of Europe, including France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and Russia, it has not been realised in this country.
- 4.3.2 Despite early hopes, history was not made compulsory to 16 in the National Curriculum. As a result, some 60% of pupils give the subject up at 14, though in some schools the actual figure is higher. History has also been excluded from the assessment structure based on SATs (Standard Assessment Tasks). Some history departments have been pressurised to fit the whole of the Key Stage 3 curriculum into Years 7 and 8; this trend is already being exacerbated by the two-year Key Stage 3 Project within the Key Stage 3 National Strategy.

- 4.3.3 The tradition of allowing pupils to choose their 16+ examination subjects at 14 is long-established in this country. It is dictated by the teaching requirements of GCSE, which necessitate reducing the number of subjects any one pupil studies. However, the options system has significant drawbacks. 14 is a very early age to be making decisions whose consequences can last a lifetime. All too often options systems consist in reality of a sometimes rather undignified competition between departments to 'sell' themselves to impressionable pupils. In history departments it is common practice for teachers to ensure that their coverage of 'attractive' topics with a strong appeal to the more basic instincts, typically those involving war or violence, coincide with the options period. It is noticeable that whenever pupils desert a particular subject in large numbers at options time, as has happened at different times with history, modern languages and music, it is treated in public as a matter of grave concern; yet the obvious corollary, to keep Foundation subjects compulsory to 16, is seldom addressed. The proposals of the Tomlinson Committee for a 14-19 diploma retaining an assessment point at 16 offer an opportunity for addressing this point and providing for a more coherent curriculum at 14-16.
- 4.3.4 A particular consequence of the insistence on allowing pupils to drop history at 14 has been the phenomenon of repeated coverage of the history of Nazi Germany, at Year 9, Year 10, Year 11 and beyond. This point will be addressed in more detail in Section 5.

5. Consultation with specialists

'Wilfrid! Claude! Let those children go at once. Miss Hope, what on earth is the meaning of this scene?'

'Early Roman history; the Sabine women, don't you know? It's the Schartz-Metterklume method to make children understand history by acting it themselves; fixes it in their memory, you know. Of course, if, thanks to your interference, your boys go through life thinking that the Sabine women ultimately escaped, I really cannot be held responsible.'

'You may be very clever and modern, Miss Hope', said Mrs Quabarl firmly, 'but I should like you to leave here by the next train. Your luggage will be sent after you as soon as it arrives'.

'Saki' The Schartz-Metterklume Method (1914)

- 5.1 This section lays out the major issues that emerged from our consultation with history education specialists, with higher education, and with the wider history world. These issues formed the basis for our questionnaire consultation with teachers and pupils.

5.2 History for all

- 5.2.1 Everyone has a history, and everyone has a right to know it. There is no reason why the enormous public appetite for history should not be reflected among young people in school, and the popularity of school history suggests that, where the subject is well taught and resourced, this is indeed the result. Courses in history should be open equally to pupils of all abilities and backgrounds, and not just to the more able. As one history teacher has pointed out:

Our 'weaker' teenagers with struggling literacy need history ten times more than those able pupils capable of gaining the magic 'C' at GCSE.

Muriel Whitehead, letter in Teaching History No.106 (March 2002)

- 5.2.2 History can inculcate a range of important personal skills and attributes, but it also has a number of unique characteristics. It is the only curriculum subject which develops a sense of chronology and time. It is the key subject in developing a sense of identity, whether personal, regional, ethnic, national or international. For this reason, the importance of history in the education of all children at least up to the age of 16 has repeatedly been stressed, not only by professional bodies such as the Historical Association and Schools History Project, but also by inter-governmental bodies engaged in the development and promotion of democratic values, notably the Council of Europe.
- 5.2.3 In practice, however, too many pupils are denied the chance to study their history in their more mature years. In large part this is because of the operation of the 14+ options system noted at 4.3.3 above. In at least one case it has been suggested that the options systems has been weighted so as to limit history to the most able pupils.
- 5.2.4 The need to ensure that school history is inclusive and relevant to all pupils also places major obligations on history teachers to ensure appropriate content coverage and a range of different types of work. Our findings suggest that some teachers and pupils find current provision heavily Euro-centric. This does not necessarily mean that teachers should move over to teaching the history of every part of the world or restructuring whole schemes of work, but it does mean thinking carefully about how to make historical events relevant. It has long been recognised, for example, that some pupils prefer social history topics to political history, and that military history tends to appeal more to boys than to girls. There is some anecdotal evidence to suggest that girls often prefer to study earlier periods of history. We will consider the issue of content coverage and selection in more detail below. However, there is much that history teachers can do within the current curricular pattern without disrupting the course of teaching. Coverage of historical refugees or tyranny can be related to modern examples, of which some pupils may have direct or indirect experience. There is no reason why, for example, children of Bosnian decent should not learn about the Angles and Saxons; however, it is only courteous, and sensible, to consider parallels and contrasts between the movement of peoples to England in the early middle ages and similar movements in the twentieth century. Some pupils who responded to our questionnaire said they would like the opportunity to study the history of India and Pakistan. While it may not be practical to build this immediately into the curriculum, such pupils might appreciate a comparison, however brief, between German reactions to the Treaty of Versailles and reactions in the Indian subcontinent to Partition after 1947.

5.3 The fragmentation of school history

- 5.3.1 One of the clearest messages to come from our consultations was a widespread concern that history post-14 had become both fragmented and divorced from actual historical practice. This fragmentation takes different forms. In terms of content coverage, GCSE, AS and A level courses now consist of a set of separate, unitted studies, often with no obvious relation to each other. At A2, despite the existence of a 'synoptic' unit, our consultations revealed widespread concern at the lack of overall chronology or coherence.
- 5.3.2 This fragmentation is exacerbated by the way the curriculum is structured. There is no systematic through-planning from 14-19. GCSE and GCE are often designed, set and marked by different people and operate to different assessment objectives and mark criteria. There is no obvious continuity of content coverage, and there are discrepancies in assessment patterns. For example, examination and analysis of historical interpretations is developed

- and assessed at Key Stage 3, and features at points in A level but, in practice, is very inadequately assessed at GCSE.
- 5.3.3 For a combination of reasons, structural, historical and logistic, GCSE and A level courses in history have developed in almost complete isolation from each other. There has never been any attempt to plan a coherent course of study from 14-19, with the result that those who study history at both GCSE and A level often find themselves studying topics twice over. On the other hand, some elements developed at GCSE, for example, local history within SHP courses, are almost never revisited or built upon at A level.
- 5.3.4 This fragmentation is perhaps most worrying within the assessment pattern. A strong feeling emerged consistently in our consultations that, for whatever reasons, assessment at GCSE and at A level has parted company with good historical practice. Examination courses have separated source work from historical argument and present it in the form of artificial exercises, using short extracts which sometimes hardly merit the term 'historical sources' at all.
- 5.3.5 Whatever else happens to history at 14-19, it is essential that it should be planned in a more coherent way, and that its component parts, in terms both of content and of activities for assessment, should be brought together again into a more complete, enjoyable, and academically valuable whole.

5.4 Historical content

- 5.4.1 It is not within the brief given to the HACP to produce, at this stage, a prescribed list of historical topics to be taught at 14-19. Moreover, the experience of those who drew up and later refined National Curriculum history suggests that any list of topics draws accusations either of overloading teachers, or of 'leaving out' major figures, often with the strong suggestion that this is done to a political agenda.¹⁰
- 5.4.2 Lists of historical topics can also be highly misleading. There is a huge difference between racing through a list of events in a single lesson with a class, and taking the time to teach about each one properly. The second approach, though clearly of greater value in developing pupils' historical understanding, may be judged to have 'covered' less history than the first, even though the pupils who experienced the first approach will almost certainly quickly forget much of what they were taught.
- 5.4.3 One important approach to this problem of balancing the demands of depth and breadth in historical content lies in the work of Dale Banham, who has written of the 'overview lurking within the depth': in other words, detailed study over a series of lessons of a single historical topic can bring out a number of major themes which go across the whole period, and do so in such a way that the pupils are more likely to understand and remember them. Thus an in-depth study of the controversial reign of King John can bring out issues relating to the medieval church, the nature of kingship and its relationship to the baronage, the relationship between England and France and the position of the Angevin Empire, attitudes towards Crusade, land tenure and concepts of feudal lordship and so on, all of which are of relevance to understanding the whole of the medieval period rather than just John's reign. Thus, seen from outside, it might appear that pupils have 'only' studied King John, when in reality they have studied and grasped much more.¹¹
- 5.4.4 In our consultations we were confronted with a paradox. On the one hand, there is an awareness of the danger of 'content overload'. As has been noted above, this is a very old

concern, which goes back to the earliest days of history teaching. At the same time, there was a major concern among all those we consulted that history courses have become very narrow, especially at A level. Where, before the introduction of Curriculum 2000, it was common for students to cover, albeit in outline, a whole period of about 100 years of British or English history alongside an equivalent period of foreign history, coverage is now reduced sometimes to an excessive concentration on a period often of little more than twenty years. The requirement to cover 100 years is sometimes addressed through a single unit. This creates an unbalanced course of study. Even within the periods studied in detail, coverage is often very narrow. University historians complain, for example, that many prospective undergraduates, while claiming to have studied the history of Europe in the inter-war period, in practice know only about Germany and Russia. The development of the 'successor states' in central and eastern Europe, Fascist Italy, the Slump, the Abyssinian crisis, the Spanish Civil War, and the political background to the British and French policies of appeasement are often left out completely.

- 5.4.5 Content overload is a legitimate concern, but it needs to be defined. Historical content cannot be measured or weighed like a consignment of rice: it is entirely dependent on outside factors. It clearly depends on the time available for teaching. It also depends on the nature and quality of resources; a good textbook can save a lot of classroom time by freeing the teacher from the need to go over the outline of events and allowing time for activities to deepen the students' understanding. Finally, content overload is heavily dictated by the nature of the assessment and the detailed requirements of the examination. The more detail is required by the examiners, the heavier the burden on the teacher. Content needs to be considered in context, and set alongside the equally legitimate concern of inadequate coverage.
- 5.4.6 Before anyone draws up any sort of list of historical topics for study, it is essential to clarify the criteria which should govern their selection. *These criteria must be historical criteria.* At present, content is often selected according to crude market criteria – what will attract pupils to history and away from competing subjects, which books and resources are available, which examination courses are on offer, and so on.

5.4.7 Criteria for Historical Content

Our consultations suggest that the content of history courses at 14-19 should be selected according to the following criteria:

- coherence and progression across the whole 14-19 age range
- diversity of experience
- significance
- a sense of period
- chronology
- encounter with different societies
- local history and the historic environment
- research and enquiry
- interpretations
- case studies

These criteria are defined in more detail below.

5.4.8 Coherence and progression across the whole 14-19 age range

While it is recognised that many pupils will continue to give up history at 16, it should be possible for them to follow a coherent course of study through to 18 if they so choose – and if it is coherent, there is a better chance that they will so choose. Coherence need not mean a strictly chronological course, beginning in Year 10 and leaving the most recent history to Year 13; however, there should be a single structure of assessment, and both the content and the types of historical activity encountered at 16-19 should relate to, and build upon, those encountered at 14-16, which in turn should relate to those encountered at Key Stage 3. Only in this way can clear progression through the different key stages be guaranteed.

5.4.9 Diversity of experience

History is a practical subject. Pupils should be introduced to a wide range of different types of historical work in the classroom and beyond. The QCA is currently developing a 'hybrid' GCSE course in history and heritage which offers the chance to develop some of these possibilities. As well as classroom activities, pupils should have the opportunity to engage in historical fieldwork, including archaeology; in research work with archives, whether using archives directly or through resources placed on the internet; in work with historic sites and the historic environment, including the locality; and in work with museums and galleries. They should have the chance to analyse the presentation of history in the broadcast media.

5.4.10 Significance

Although the idea that pupils should consider the significance of the events they study is not new, it has not generally been well carried out. Pupils are not generally required in any formal sense to consider the significance of the topics they study. Robert Phillips called historical significance the 'forgotten key element'.¹² To some extent this neglect may be the result of an over-concentration on causation – what the French historian Marc Bloch called the *Idol*, and even the demon, of *Origins*¹³ – and a consequent neglect of the *consequences* of historical events. Historical significance takes many different forms: significance to people at the time (which may not hold true now); significance with hindsight; an example may even be judged significant because, while not important in itself, it illustrates or encapsulates a wider phenomenon. It is asking much of children to study something without explaining why it is significant; consideration of historical significance should therefore be a stipulation for assessment at 14-19.

5.4.11 A sense of period

It was noted that, although pupils may spend a long time studying a period of history, they often emerge without any real sense of the period, of its attitudes or tastes. To a large extent, this is because examination courses require such a heavy concentration on political history. Although National Curriculum history was drawn up according to the 'PESC' (Political, Economic, Social, Cultural) formula, this has never been applied systematically to history post-14. Timetable and curricular constraints also militate against the sort of cross-curricular links which can help to develop a sense of period through looking at the literature or fashions or beliefs of a different time. History is an excellent subject for cross-curricular work, and a commitment to developing a sense of period would help enormously to draw out its full potential. For example, it would be a seriously incomplete picture of the

Victorians which omitted their religious beliefs and the challenge posed to them by the ideas of Darwin. There are obvious possibilities for using literature to develop a better sense of the Tudor period. Social and cultural history, and its attendant cross-curricular links, are important enough to be central to curricular planning in history.

5.4.12 Chronology

History is the only school subject which explicitly sets out to develop a sense of chronology. Chronology provides a framework within which we can then place any other historical topic as we encounter it. Our sense of chronology is so deeply ingrained that it can be difficult to appreciate the difficulties encountered by those who do not have it. National Curriculum history is listed chronologically in the documentation for Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3. Although there is no formal requirement to teach topics in chronological order, this is the most recent advice from QCA; even A level students can find it confusing when they encounter topics or events out of chronological order. It is important, therefore, that history 14-19 should ensure that students emerge with an enhanced sense of chronology. There are different ways of approaching this. The Schools History Project does it through a GCSE unit based on a Study in Development, taking a single theme – typically the History of Medicine – and looking at it over a long period of time, usually from ancient or prehistoric times to the present day. Many teachers are familiar with this approach, and reactions through discussion forums on the internet suggest considerable support for this approach. However, it is not without its drawbacks. It concentrates chronology in one single unit and one single theme. Another approach which emerged from our consultations was to build chronology into every unit of study, in ways similar to that pioneered by Dale Banham and Michael Riley.¹⁴ This would mean placing units into their long-term contexts, looking both at their historical background and, particularly, at their consequences for the modern day. This might mean confronting the question of updating teachers' and students' knowledge. There are possibilities here for creative use of Information Technology: colleagues in geography, politics, economics and modern languages have valuable expertise in developing and using this sort of constantly-updated material.

5.4.13 Encounter with different societies

History should expand pupils' horizons by bringing them into contact with people who lived in very different societies from their own. This need not necessarily mean the history of far-away lands. The lives of people living in the same town, or even the same street, but at different times can be just as exotic to modern pupils as the lives of people living in completely different cultures. However, it is nevertheless important that the pupils should encounter the international dimension of history. All pupils are citizens of the world, and their history lessons should reflect this. History 14-19 should therefore include the opportunity to study the culture of different countries, including western (European, North American, Australasian) and non-western cultures. This is particularly important in the light of the decline of modern languages in secondary schools and the consequent weakening of the international dimension in education.

5.4.14 Local history and the historic environment

The diversity of historical experience noted above should give sufficient space for pupils to engage with the historic environment, especially the local environment. Local history is often undertaken very successfully at Key Stage 2 or 3, but apart from the local study unit within the SHP course it virtually disappears post-14. Thus a key factor in forging links

between the school and the local community is lost. The local – which need not in any way mean the parochial – is an important aspect of that sense of personal identity which we look to school history to develop. Local history may be studied in its own right, or it may be used to illustrate the impact of major events and developments: the activities of local branches of the League of Nations or Peace Pledge Unions for pupils studying the 1930s, or the local registers of Catholics kept in Elizabethan times by Justices of the Peace for those studying the Tudors. Local history also has considerable potential for developing the international and global dimensions of history: seaports are an obvious example, but there is, for example, evidence of Britain's imperial past to be found in buildings and street names right across the country. All pupils should have the opportunity to study the local dimension of history at 14-19.

5.4.15 Research and Inquiry

One of the most successful developments in history teaching in recent years has been the A level Individual Study. At its best, this involved students researching topics of their own choice and producing studies of such high quality that it is by no means unknown for their work to be published. It is recognised that this work can place strains upon teachers and upon resources; moreover, in recent years, the range of topics studied has narrowed considerably and reflects much the same areas of study as examination topics. Nevertheless, at its best the Individual Study did give students the opportunity to engage in genuine historical inquiry and research, and to present their findings. It was particularly successful in stretching students of apparently moderate ability. Historical inquiry can also be presented within a more closely guided framework; the local study unit of the SHP is a good example of this at GCSE. Historical inquiry provides the context and purpose for all work with historical sources: without it, there is little point in working with historical sources at all. Opportunities for inquiry work, whether with actual resources or via websites, should feature in all history courses 14-19.

5.4.16 Historical interpretations

Debate about different interpretations is central to history. Although this is often thought of in terms of historiography, the study of different schools of historical interpretation, it can also embrace analysis of the interpretations embedded in other ways of presenting history, including television programmes, schoolbooks, museum displays and anniversary celebrations. It is often thought that engagement with historical interpretations requires advanced thinking and that therefore it is best kept for the later stages of schooling, or even for university study. However, some of the best work in historical interpretation takes place at Key Stage 3. Unfortunately, the study of different interpretations is less adequate at Key Stage 4, and it is unevenly covered at AS and A level. Some courses lay considerable stress upon historical interpretations; other courses allow students to pass without having studied historical interpretations at all. Consideration of historical interpretations should be an integral part of courses of history at 14-19.

5.4.17 Case studies

The conflicting claims of 'breadth' and 'depth' have long been the subject of debate among history teachers. Our discussions raised the issue of case studies and their potential for learning. A case study is defined as a subject of study, smaller in scale than a traditional

historical topic: it might be the career of one individual, or even a single historical event. The idea would be to select case studies that present the pupils with particular problems and dilemmas to resolve, either in terms of their own judgement on the past, or by presenting them with a dilemma faced by someone in the past. Examples might include Elizabeth I's, and her ministers', dilemma over what to do about the threat posed by Mary, Queen of Scots; the dilemma faced by handloom weavers deciding how to respond to the new machinery putting them out of work; or Churchill's decision whether or not to fight on after the fall of France in 1940. Such case studies, presented as decision-making exercises, can help to engage pupils' interest in the people of the past, while at the same time introducing them to issues and concepts appropriate to the period. Such case studies might be used as the basis for the units of history courses at 14-19.

5.5 Prescription

Implicit in these recommendations is an element of prescription. Viewed in a positive light, prescription has the potential to broaden pupils' experience of history in all its forms, as happens, for example, in SHP. Prescription is merely the recognition that certain aspects of historical work are so important that every child who studies history should encounter them. If we believe in the importance of diversity, we must legislate for it. However, to achieve this there must be sufficient professional development and adequate resources. This point is developed in more detail at 5.13 below.

5.6 Relevance

There was a concern among the specialists we consulted that the relevance of history is not always made explicit to pupils. History can fall victim to what was termed the 'So what?' factor. This would appear to be confirmed by the pupils' responses to our questionnaire, a number of whom expressed the wish to study the historical background to events in the news. Relevance is a complex concept. It is a common misconception that only the most recent history is 'relevant'; in fact, the relevance of different periods of history can vary over time and from person to person. For example, for some pupils the religious conflicts of the sixteenth century might well be more relevant to their lives than the more recent ideological confrontations of the Cold War. The current world situation has led to a revival of interest in imperialism, which only a few years ago seemed a dead and 'irrelevant' historical topic. While it remains true that history can and should help pupils attain a grasp of current affairs, the structure of the history curriculum at 14-19 needs to be flexible enough to accommodate changing priorities and perceptions of relevance. No topics should be regarded as permanent and immutable.

5.7 Repeating topics

A major problem faced by history teachers is that chronological coverage inevitably means that the earlier historical periods are covered by younger children, and tend therefore to be associated with immature understanding; later periods can therefore appear, quite unfairly, to be more 'grown up' and worthy of more serious attention. One way round this has long been to 'revisit' historical periods at intervals, broadly along the lines of Jerome Bruner's model of the 'spiral curriculum'. This idea was built into National Curriculum history, and is evident at Key Stages 2 and 3, where topics like the Tudors and Victorians are first encountered in the primary school and then again, in their wider context, at secondary

school. The idea is that with each 'revisiting' the pupils' understanding and knowledge of the period will deepen. There is much merit in this idea, and practice at Key Stages 2 and 3 appears to suggest that children do indeed benefit. However, as one school put it, revisiting topics is something of a 'two-edged sword'. Its benefits must be set aside the equally important issue of extending the pupils' knowledge and horizons by introducing them to new topics, themes and periods. The revisiting embedded in National Curriculum history is planned for; that which exists at GCSE and A level has largely come about by accident. In particular, a heavy concentration on the European dictatorships of the 1930s both at GCSE and at A level has proved the subject of mounting concern.

5.8 The 'Hitlerisation' of history

The way in which the study of the Third Reich has come to dominate school history is a curious phenomenon, apparently peculiar to this country. There is no reason to suppose that any curriculum planners, at National Curriculum, GCSE or A level, ever intended the situation that currently exists. Bearing in mind that the majority of pupils drop history at 14, a unit was included in the Key Stage 3 history curriculum on the Twentieth Century World, to be taught in Year 9. In practice this unit concentrates on the two world wars, and especially on Hitler. Nazi Germany already featured prominently in courses in Modern World History at GCSE, and the Schools History Project was eventually prevailed upon to introduce a Study in Depth on Nazi Germany. In turn, more students were beginning to study Nazi Germany at A level. This trend became even more marked with the introduction of Curriculum 2000: at Edexcel, for example, it remains possible to complete five out of six A level units simply by studying Germany from 1919-1939. It has therefore become increasingly common for A level students to leave school having studied Hitler every year from Year 9 to Year 13. Universities complain not only that candidates appear to know no other history, but that they then opt in large numbers for special subjects in Nazi Germany. When in due course these graduates become teachers, they feel most confident teaching about Nazi Germany. Meanwhile, publishers continue to produce materials on Nazi Germany, so that it becomes increasingly difficult to break out of the cycle. Such heavy coverage amounts to much more than 'revisiting'; it is difficult to see how it can be justified either in historical or in educational terms. A number of our respondents expressed concern about over-coverage of Nazi Germany, and one noted that students are turned off history in Year 13 'because of too much Nazism'. Teachers at the Prince of Wales's 2004 Education Summer School at Buxton recommended that this over-concentration on Hitler should be guarded against by prescribed stipulations about the selection of content in history courses 14-19. One school reported to us that it had reduced its coverage of Nazi Germany in direct response to the Prince of Wales's summer school.

- 5.9 Even more serious are the moral implications arising from the nature of the topic. In December 2002 the German ambassador, Herr Thomas Matussek, complained after an assault on two German schoolboys by a gang of London teenagers, that over-concentration on Nazi Germany in British schools has stoked anti-German feeling. This would appear to be supported by recent research on the issue.¹⁵ One school responding to our questionnaire reported of its pupils that GCSE Modern World History 'makes them very anti-German'. Moreover, although Nazi Germany is widely studied, both at GCSE and at A level there is much less concentration on the Second World War itself. Wartime occupation hardly features at either level, and even the Holocaust can be omitted: one SHP GCSE specification specifically excludes the war from its coverage of Nazi Germany. Coverage that stops in 1939 can easily give pupils the impression that Hitler was a successful if harsh ruler, who extended his country's frontiers at minimal cost. The German government was so concerned at the

coverage of German history in British schools, that it recently invited a group of British history teachers to visit Germany to learn more about the country's post-war democratic history. It needs to be borne in mind that this heavy concentration on Nazi Germany lies in the context of saturation coverage in the media, what one news magazine called 'Our shameful Nazi fetish'.¹⁶ In just one week in July 2003, unconnected with any anniversary or special event, British terrestrial and satellite television showed at least 58 programmes connected with Nazi Germany and the Second World War, including 47 documentaries on commanders and weaponry, feature films, dramas and comedies, and a whole day of programming on the UK History Channel.¹⁷

5.10 Sourcework

- 5.10.1 Work with historical source material has been a central feature of school history for some thirty years now. The idea has always been to engage students in the process of analysis of source material by which historians investigate the past and reach their judgements. Our consultations revealed, however, that there is considerable concern that current assessment of source work has deviated from the original intentions of those who pioneered it, and bears little relation to actual historical practice. While clearly source work in the classroom, when it is well done, can help to enhance teaching and learning, and one or two schools did express themselves satisfied with current practice, many of the schools we consulted had some very harsh things to say about source questions in examinations, describing them as 'absolutely appalling', 'banal', 'repetitive', 'formulaic', 'very boring and not real history'. There was considerable concern that pupils are expected to reach considered judgements on the basis of very small extracts: one school reported that 'sources are far too short to write anything meaningful about them', another protested against the setting of 'too many "gobbets" that are too hard to hang any meaningful analysis on'.
- 5.10.2 The steady decline of coursework means that source work at 14-19 is almost entirely assessed through external examination. The sources in these examination papers are often reduced to short 'gobbet' extracts, of two or three lines, presented in uniform format and with inadequate information as to their provenance and context. Examples of this will be presented in Section 7. The definition of 'sources' has now got so loose as to include short extracts from standard A level textbooks; the university historians to whom we showed some examples of AS level examination papers were unanimous in criticising this practice. The questions asked of pupils have become mechanistic and formulaic, often bearing little historical or educational purpose. As a result, sourcework, instead of enthusing pupils with a love of history, as it ought to, too often appears to be the least inspiring part of the subject. This is reflected in the responses to our student questionnaire, where, even though 67% of the respondents said they enjoyed work with historical sources, almost as many again (61%) said that work with sources had not led them to want to carry on with the subject.
- 5.10.3 Historians work with sources in the context of historical inquiry, and it is in this context, rather than in examination papers, that pupils should be introduced to them. As one school commented, current examination source work 'has little bearing on the use of sources in genuine historical research.' Examples of good practice of inquiry-based source work in schools can be found at Key Stage 3, in the SHP local study unit at GCSE, and in the A level Individual Study. *The use of historical sources is central to the work of the historian, and should remain central to the teaching and learning of history 14-19.* Our findings suggest, however, that many current source-based examination questions and papers do not, in fact, assess the ability to work with historical source material at all. *We therefore strongly recommend that the current practice of assessing sourcework through small examination*

exercises should be ended. Instead, assessment of work with historical sources should usually be done through compulsory inquiry-based exercises, conducted and assessed as centre-based coursework.

5.11 Historical narrative

Therefore narrativization is primary rather than derivative, so primary that the real wonder is that the historians were so late in discovering it.

L. Mink 'Every man his or her own analyst', quoted in Grant Bage *Narrative Matters: Teaching and Learning History Through Story* (London, 1999)

- 5.11.1 It is clear from our consultations, and from comment in the press and at other conferences that there is widespread concern about the lack of narrative in history teaching. However, it is also clear that the word 'narrative' means different things to different people, and it is therefore important to define its meaning clearly for the purposes of this report.

5.11.2 Different definitions of narrative

There are essentially three commonly encountered definitions of historical narrative:

- grand narrative
- meta-narrative
- narrative as a form of historical communication

Grand narrative is usually understood as a long-term approach to national history, tracing it chronologically over many centuries. *Meta-narrative* is a term usually associated with the work of the American scholar, Hayden White. Like grand narrative, it refers to accounts spread over a long time-span, but it can be applied to any historical theme. The popular SHP Study in Development on the history of medicine is an example of a meta-narrative. Narrative as a form of historical communication is essentially a literary form, which can be applied to any historical topic, long or short. It means the construction and presentation of a version of historical events which inevitably reflects the author's own understanding and interpretation of those events. It is in this third sense that the term is used in this report.

5.11.3 Criticisms of narrative

Narrative has traditionally been regarded by teachers as a low-order skill, associated with academically weaker pupils. Writing 'simple' or 'straightforward' narrative usually features in the lowest levels of mark schemes at GCSE and A level. As a response to analytical questions requiring answers in the form of a reasoned argument this is clearly correct. Learning by heart a given narrative account, whether drawn from a textbook or from the teacher, and regurgitating it, is an activity of little educational value.

5.11.4 Construction of historical narrative

The *construction* of historical narrative from historical source material, on the other hand, is a high-order skill which lies at the heart of the historian's craft. It is the end to which

historical research and source analysis leads. The eminent Cambridge historian Herbert Butterfield noted that 'It is perhaps most important of all that the student should reflect on the ingredients and the internal constitution of narrative history'.¹⁸ Constructing historical narrative involves the selection of relevant material and the presentation of a coherent account, integrating clear explanation and description with supporting evidence to put across the writer's interpretation of events within an appropriate literary style. At its best, narrative construction is a form of presenting an argument. It differs from writing an essay in that an essay is an argued response to a specific question; a constructed narrative allows the student greater flexibility and scope in determining the parameters of the work and the questions addressed. Indeed, it may not require a specific question set by the teacher or examiner at all. Clearly, this is an area which requires further research into how such tasks might best be constructed and assessed.

- 5.11.5 It has long been recognised that pupils enjoy learning history through reading or listening to narrative. As one school put it: 'Good stories always have a place in hooking students'. A level students have also shown themselves capable of constructing well-researched historical narrative through the Individual Study; however, it has not hitherto been possible to credit them for this because, apart from some rather limited questions on some AS papers, the construction of narrative is not catered for within the A level assessment structure. The construction of narrative, as opposed to the unthinking repetition of someone else's narrative, can go a long way towards addressing the problem of fragmentation of school history outlined above, and can provide a powerful sense of purpose and direction to pupils' work with historical sources. One school commented that narrative is 'not placed high enough'. Again, further research is clearly needed into how the construction of narrative might fit into the teaching and learning pattern and especially on how it might most effectively be assessed. However, our findings suggest that narrative construction has a strong claim to be brought within the assessment structure at GCSE, AS and A level.

5.11.6 Narrative and inclusive history

Whatever approach is taken towards 'Grand' or meta-narrative, it is important that any history course should recognise that there is no one single narrative for any nation's history, or for any historical topic or theme. Instead, as teachers at the Prince of Wales's 2004 Summer School pointed out, in any historical 'story' there is a multiplicity of narratives, reflecting the experiences of different people, of different social classes and ethnic backgrounds. Introducing pupils to the construction of historical narrative, and including it in the assessment pattern, helps them to realise this and to construct their own separate narratives on the same historical themes.

5.12 Assessment

The current philosophy of over-assessment in subjects encourages teaching that is fragmented, mechanistic and limiting for pupils in both the materials it promotes and the style of teaching it inspires.

*Report of the Prince of Wales Education Summer School,
Dunston Hall Hotel, Norwich, 30 June-3 July 2003*

Let's get one thing straight about any examined course: *the course should come first, then the assessment.*

Chris Culpin 'Why we must change history GCSE' *Teaching History* 109 (December 2002)

- 5.12.1 The principle that assessment should be determined by classroom practice, and not vice versa, is so fundamental to education that it should not be necessary to repeat it. However, we found that concerns about the way assessment has diverged from good practice both in school and in academic history, to the point where it bears little discernible relation to either, were so widespread and expressed so forcefully that we feel the need to reiterate the point here.
- 5.12.2 Concern about assessment at GCSE, AS and A level was based on three main themes:
- the decline of teacher assessment
 - the quality of questions on examination papers
 - the limited range of types of assessment
- 5.12.3 Teacher assessment has a successful track record in history and has been the vehicle for promoting innovative and rigorous work. In recent years, however, the proportion of the assessment structure devoted to teacher-assessed coursework has been steadily reduced. Coursework has been reduced in many cases to formal tests, sometimes set by the awarding body and carried out in examination conditions. Although in theory teachers are at liberty to devise their own coursework and assessment, in practice few dare to deviate from the models set by the awarding bodies, and sourcework exercises are commonly simply downloaded from awarding body websites. Coursework has ceased to be an area where teachers can pursue their own particular expertise with the pupils, and has become a uniform and mechanistic exercise.
- 5.12.4 Section 7 will look in detail at some examples of examination papers at GCSE, AS and A level. The major concerns expressed were that assessment tasks bear little relation to actual historical practice either in the classroom or in academic history. They have become mechanistic and formulaic, and inspire neither pupils nor teachers. Mark schemes are so prescriptive that they often do not allow credit to be given to bright students who can 'think outside of the box', or draw in comparisons from beyond the boundaries of the topic or question. In this way, current assessment practice, instead of developing good practice in history, can actually penalise it.
- 5.12.5 There is a broad consensus among educational researchers that a variety of modes of assessment makes that assessment more accurate and reliable. Assessment in history has become much more restricted and uniform. It needs to be broadened, to include much more scope for teacher assessment. There needs to be much more variety in assessment tasks. Some tasks which currently feature within Key Skills, such as debate or making presentations, might more suitably be assessed within subjects like history. The HA's close links with Euroclio, the European network of history teacher associations, can be used to benefit from the extensive experience of some European countries in using oral assessment within history. The Tomlinson Committee's call for more teacher assessment and for a substantial element of individual research work within the new diploma is very welcome in this connection, and offers an important opportunity for improving the quality of assessment in history.

5.13 Implications for Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

In fact it is not too much to say that the teacher who has ceased to read History should cease to teach it.

*Board of Education Memorandum on Teaching and Organisation
in Secondary Schools: History (London, 1908)*

- 5.13.1 It has long been recognised that children learn best from teachers who are themselves enthusiasts for the subject. This does not necessarily correlate to formal qualifications: many of the most effective teachers have built up their expertise from amateur passions and interests. However, there has to be enough flexibility in the system to allow this personal interest and commitment to grow. The ideas and proposals put forward in this report have major implications for CPD, and without sufficient training they are unlikely to succeed.
- 5.13.2 Currently, the overwhelming majority of in-service training available to history teachers is related to specific aspects of assessment. Much training offered in the 14-19 sector is provided directly by awarding bodies as guidance on the specifics of how to prepare pupils for particular examination papers. It is rare for teachers to obtain funding or release to develop their own subject knowledge and expertise. If the nature of school history at 14-19 is to be improved, this will have to change.
- 5.13.3 At present, there is little incentive for teachers to extend their subject expertise beyond the minimum required for teaching a particular specification. In the absence of funding, any extra reading or training has to be undertaken at the teacher's own expense and in the teacher's own time. Extending and developing subject knowledge is not a criterion in Ofsted inspection. *National Standards for Subject Leaders* issued by the Teacher Training Agency notes that 'subject leaders must have a good knowledge of the subject' but emphasises that 'these standards focus primarily on expertise in the leadership and management of a subject'.¹⁹ It is unrealistic to expect improvements in school history while teachers' own subject expertise is so undervalued.
- 5.13.4 Many of the suggestions for developing the practical aspects of history also have implications for CPD. Relatively few history graduates have direct experience of archaeology, site work or work with museums, or even work with archives. Most teachers' experience of these has therefore been picked up in the course of their teaching. There are some very good courses in these practical fields run by bodies like English Heritage and the National Trust. However, if this sort of work is to be used to transform history 14-19 into a much more active and practical subject, the provision and extension of this sort of training will need to be made a priority.

5.14 Implications for Higher Education

Ian Dawson of the SHP has asked 'Why do PGCE students enter their courses with so little useful historical knowledge?'²⁰ It is common to hear the wish expressed for closer links between schools and universities; however, it remains true that in practice few teachers and lecturers are able to keep up to date with developments in the other sector. Some university figures have made important contributions to the development of school history, but in many cases university comment is restricted to what schools can do to prepare students to study history at university. However, the relationship between school and university is much closer than this would suggest. University courses determine the subject knowledge and technical expertise of new graduate teachers, which in turn affects the knowledge and expertise of those who apply to university. Our consultations did not suggest that history degree courses should be geared specifically to the needs of school history, but that they could help considerably by providing a more systematic basis in the different types of work history teachers need to be familiar with. All history graduates should be familiar with the use of archives, with fieldwork, and with the use and operation of museums. Ideally, they should have had at least an introduction to the basic principles of archaeology. Such a range of experience will fit them not only for teaching, but for a range of other types of employment too. Universities could also make a major contribution to CPD: bursaries might be made available to help teachers attend certificated courses extending their subject knowledge and credit might be available to teachers who gain qualifications in this way.

5.15 Textbooks

Concern was expressed during our consultations at the way in which textbook provision has become dominated by the specific requirements of particular examination courses. A question was raised about the probity of close links between awarding bodies and particular publishers, with some texts bearing awarding body endorsement as a sort of 'official' text, an impression reinforced by the practice of retaining examiners as textbook authors. It was felt that this, along with the practice at some awarding bodies of including extracts from textbooks as historical sources, contributes to the narrowing of the history curriculum and to the unhealthily dominant role played in it by assessment. In particular, the practice of 'badging' textbooks can lead teachers and pupils to think that those are the only books that need to be read, and can therefore actually discourage pupils from wider reading.

5.16 Information Technology

Our consultations did not consider the role of Information Technology in detail; it was felt that this is best left to a later stage of discussion. However, at many points the role of Information Technology arose as an important way of addressing some of the practical problems envisaged. It was recognised that it is quite mistaken to believe that everything can be addressed by 'looking things up on the web'; much website provision is of questionable quality, and pupils are not always able to discriminate. However, online materials can be very useful in providing pupils with access to archival material, which might otherwise be difficult to get hold of; they can also provide materials for individual studies. It was recognised that the provision of appropriate online support for the history curriculum 14-19 needs to be planned for and built into the process from the beginning.

6. History and Citizenship

The central area for debate should not be whether we embrace citizenship, but what the nature of the embrace should be.

Using history to deliver citizenship is about the worst of many bad ideas to have taken hold of education.

Alison Kitson and Nicolas Kinloch *BBC History Magazine* November 2004

- 6.1 It proved very difficult to reach a consensus about the relationship between history and Citizenship. Some viewed it positively, whilst others were more sceptical. It was generally recognised that, while there are important areas of overlap between the two subjects, the relationship between them is more difficult than might at first appear.
- 6.2 Unlike history, Citizenship does not yet have the established code of principles and practices which characterise an academic *discipline*. History may well be able to provide elements of this, notably the importance of reasoned argument from evidence and the absolute necessity of looking at events in context, to avoid doctrinaire or uncritical interpretations. Historical examples are often used in considering Citizenship issues – for example, it might be asked to what extent Gandhi, or the Nazis, were 'good citizens'. There was general agreement that, since the historical elements within Citizenship courses carry enormous potential for controversy, they should always be handled by history specialists.

- 6.3 A fundamental difference between history and Citizenship is that, while one might derive moral or ethical lessons from history, this is not its primary purpose as a subject. Citizenship, on the other hand, carried an overt message: *i.e.* it is intended to help pupils appreciate the benefits of democracy. It does not follow that history teaching itself should be reconfigured or given any sort of moral purpose to meet the requirements of Citizenship. History can contribute to Citizenship, but it is no part of the role of Citizenship to determine or influence the history curriculum.
- 6.4 Nevertheless, given the important areas of overlap between history and Citizenship, and the importance of history specialists teaching these, it was felt that there is a very strong case for building these areas, as well as areas of overlap with other subjects, into the planning of the 14-19 history curriculum. It was also felt that the importance of Citizenship reinforces the importance of providing an historical education available to all pupils from 14-19.

7. Examinations

I shall argue that GCSE, as it now stands, is doomed and that euthanasia should be exercised before it implodes causing collateral damage to too many students.

Chris Culpin 'GCSE history' in Historical Association: *Past Forward: A Vision for School History 2002-2012* (2002)

- 7.1 History at 14-19 is heavily determined by the precise demands of examination courses. The criticisms offered of assessment at 4.8 above can best be appreciated by a close examination of some of the requirements of these courses.

7.2 GCSE history

- 7.2.1 There are three GCSE awarding bodies in England: OCR, AQA and Edexcel. All of them offer the same three history specifications:

- Modern World History
- Schools History Project (SHP)
- British Social and Economic History

There seems little logical reason for such a remarkable duplication of provision, beyond commercial competition between the awarding bodies. At the same time complaints have been raised about the lack of provision for ancient, medieval and early modern history at GCSE. This is compounded by the recent decision by AQA to withdraw the last surviving GCSE course in archaeology. It has taken the development of the QCA's initiative for a 'hybrid' vocational GCSE in history to bring these earlier periods back into the curriculum at this level.

- 7.2.2 Of the three GCSE history courses, the first two are by far the most commonly studied. In our survey, only 1% of respondents taught a GCSE course in British Social and Economic History. Both Modern World History and SHP originated in the 1960s as attempts to offer an alternative to the then standard pattern of O level courses, which tended to concentrate on nineteenth-century political history. Both started life as coherent curricular packages, albeit based on different philosophies and approaches to the subject. As Chris Culpin has pointed out, both have suffered badly in recent years from political interference in the curriculum.²¹ The government-imposed reduction in coursework has left the SHP course badly distorted,

with the Study in Development unit now having to bear far more of the assessment pattern than it was designed for. Modern World History, which was always meant to be a course in global history, now has to devote 25% of its assessment to British history.

7.2.3 As a result both SHP and Modern World History have narrowed their scope enormously since they were introduced as GCSE courses in 1986. At SHP the 'unseen' paper, which broadened candidates' historical experience beyond the taught course, has disappeared, and the role of the units on local and modern world history has been significantly reduced. Modern World History now consists essentially of a common pattern of topics:

- Britain in the First World War
- The Paris Peace Settlement 1919 and the Treaty of Versailles
- Russia: Lenin and Stalin
- Weimar and Nazi Germany
- The Wall Street Crash and the New Deal
- The Home Front in World War II
- The beginnings of the Cold War

Some schools will add to this either the Vietnam War or the Civil Rights movement in the USA in the 1950s and 1960s. Although it is true that specifications offer other alternatives, in practice the pressures of examinations, the need to produce good results, teacher familiarity and the availability of resources mean that few teachers stray much beyond this basic pattern. It has even made inroads in the SHP course, where a Study in Depth on Nazi Germany introduced recently in response to popular pressure has rapidly become one of the most widely studied units in the course.

7.2.4 The potential for keeping to a very narrow range of content can be illustrated from the specifications themselves.

The Modern World History specification from AQA offers this example of a possible course of study:

- International history, 1900-1914
- Britain in the First World War
- International History 1919-1949
- Britain and the Second World War
- Germany 1918-1939
- The USA 1919-1941
- Vietnam Since 1939

The June 2004 examination had two questions on the causes of the First World War; otherwise, this example is well within the pattern outlined at 7.2.3 above. The structure of the examination paper means that 'International History 1919-1949' need not in fact extend beyond 1939. It will be seen that in this example there is no coverage of the Russian Revolution at all. The core content of the OCR Modern World History Specification is very similar:

- Were the Peace Treaties of 1919-23 fair?
- To what extent was the League of Nations a success?
- Why had international peace collapsed by 1939?
- Who was to blame for the Cold War?

- How effectively did the USA contain the spread of Communism?
- How secure was the USSR's control over Eastern Europe, 1948-c1989?

In practice, candidates are allowed to select heavily from within this coverage, and can restrict their answers to the period 1919-1939. The depth studies to accompany the core cover the familiar topics of Germany, Russia and the USA between the wars, as well as South Africa under apartheid. Since only one needs to be studied, candidates may again restrict their studies to the inter-war period.

7.2.5 On the face of it, Edexcel's modern history GCSE does seem to offer a significantly different body of content. Candidates offer two outline studies and two coursework units, from the following:

Outline Studies	Depth Studies
A1 The Road to War: Europe 1870-1914	B1 The Russian Revolution 1910-24
A2 Nationalism and Independence in India c1900-49	B2 The War to End Wars 1914-19
A3 The Emergence of Modern China 1911-76	B3 Depression and the New Deal: the USA 1929-41
A4 The Rise and Fall of the Communist State: the Soviet Union 1928-91	B4 Nazi Germany c1930-39
A5 A Divided Union? The USA 1941-80	B5 The World at War 1938-45
A6 Superpower Relations 1945-90	B6 The End of Apartheid in South Africa 1982-94
A7 Conflict and the Quest for Peace in the Middle East 1948-95	B7 Conflict in Vietnam c1963-75

The requirement to cover British history is met through a centre-designed coursework unit.

There is a welcome attempt here to broaden the scope of GCSE coverage beyond the usual narrow focus outlined above. However, there are drawbacks. The Outline and Depth studies are designed to complement each other, so that a school might well choose to study, say, A4 on the Soviet Union and B1 on the Russian Revolution. However, the most striking feature is the complete absence of the international politics of the inter-war period. Thus, any school choosing to study the Depth Study on Nazi Germany will be looking at it without even a unit on Weimar Germany to set it in context.

7.2.6 Examination questions

Our consultations have revealed widespread and serious concern about the quality of examination questions at GCSE. These examples illustrate some of the criticisms that have been made:

AQA Specification B (Modern World) Paper 1 Conflict in the Modern World: International and British History
15 June 2004

Section A Option V Question 1 offers two sources relating to the 1919 Paris Peace Conference. The first comes from an unnamed British textbook, author unidentified, published in 1993; the second consists of one sentence from an election speech by Lloyd George in December 1918.

- 7.2.7 It is highly questionable historical practice to set extracts from school textbooks and present them as historical sources. They are not historical sources. The question on this particular extract asks what it tells us about Woodrow Wilson's aims at the peace conference. Since the extract lays out Wilson's aims in short, simple sentences, it is difficult to see what else the candidate is supposed to do other than to rewrite these sentences in his or her own words. The questions on Paper 2 from this same specification in June 2004 were also dominated by extracts from school textbooks, some completely unidentified – 'From a history text book, 2003' – and some from *Modern World History for AQA* by D. Ferriby and J. McCabe. This would appear to underline the concerns expressed at 5.15 above about the practice of awarding bodies 'badging' particular textbooks. In effect school textbooks are changing from being tools to aid learning and becoming the sole end and focus of the learning itself.
- 7.2.8 The question on the Lloyd George extract asks how accurate it is as a statement of Lloyd George's views on reparations. Since it clearly states his view, and in the absence of any of the rest of the speech from which it comes, the question seems entirely superfluous. After two years of study, including repeated work on source material, the longest piece of contemporary prose from the Paris Peace conference that these candidates are expected to deal with is a single sentence of twelve words. Such inadequate material actually militates against brighter candidates, who are aware of its limitations and how little they can actually say about it. It is difficult to see what the logic might be for presenting candidates with gobbets when in their English examinations these same candidates are presented with lengthy extracts from Shakespeare.
- 7.2.9 OCR History A (Schools History Project) 1935/11
 Paper 1 (Development Study with Elizabethan England)
 15 June 2004
 Paper 2 (Medicine Through Time)
 23 June 2004

A notable feature of OCR GCSE papers on all its specifications is their heavy use of visual source material, and especially of cartoons. It has often been pointed out that cartoons are conceptually highly complex, and extremely difficult for young people, especially the lower attaining, to understand. Of the three sources offered on the Medicine Through Time section on Paper 1 – by far the wider studied of the two SHP Studies in Development – one is a picture of a medieval doctor at work, with no indication of provenance other than the quite inadequate wording 'A medieval painting', and the other two are Victorian cartoons. Source B shows a number of imaginary caricatured creatures, some of them in vaguely insect-form, some of them human, within a circle. The cartoon is labelled 'A cartoon with the title 'A Drop of London Water', published in the late 1850s.' Understanding this cartoon requires an ability to think through several steps of allegory: it is an exaggeration for comic but telling effect, within a satirical magazine, of the germs and microbes that would appear if a drop of London water were to be placed under a microscope. It is impossible to judge from the picture alone whether the artist is making a point about the actual state of the water or about the alarmist stories put about by the public health reformers. Many pupils find it difficult to understand pictures in anything other than a literal sense, so that much of the message of this cartoon will almost certainly be lost on them. However, even the most able candidates will have been challenged by the question set on the source:

Study Source B.

How far would the Romans have understood the message of this cartoon? Use the source and your knowledge to explain your answer.

This question can only be described as anachronistic and unhistorical, and it should not have been posed. The only proper response for a historian is to reject the premise on which the question is based, but since this is not allowed for in the mark scheme, and it would be unfair to expect any candidate to take such a risk, such a question in effect encourages unhistorical thinking.

- 7.2.10 Similar criticisms may be made about Paper 2, where candidates are presented with six sources, two of which are cartoons. One of these shows Aneurin Bevan in the guise of Mrs Squeers from *Nicholas Nickleby*, doling out gruel to doctors, who are portrayed as the boys at Dotheboys Hall. The allusion is not explained in the label to the source, which merely states that 'it shows Aneurin Bevan introducing the NHS to doctors'. Without this explanation, it will have been very difficult for many candidates to understand the meaning of the cartoon, especially since one of the other sources, which consists of a single sentence from Bevan, mentions 'the never-ending stream of medicines which is pouring down British throats'. One source gives figures of doctors for and against the introduction of the NHS in 1948, though, crucially, whether the figures relate to before or after it had been introduced it does not say. The questions are in familiar GCSE style and lend themselves to coaching; however, although this paper is meant to test candidates' understanding both of sources and of interpretations of history, none of the questions actually addresses the latter.

7.2.11 Edexcel History A (Modern European and World History)

Paper 1 15 June 2004

Paper 2 23 June 2004

Paper 1 consists of questions requiring short- to medium-length answers, testing a mixture of factual recall and historical understanding. Candidates are given three or four events and dates and asked to explain terms, describe events and outline why major developments happened. The second part of each question asks candidates to consider the significance of certain events and to describe general trends drawn from within the period of study. This approach helps students to organise their knowledge and understanding of the period, and is not significantly different from examining techniques under the old GCE O level. The questions are somewhat predictable, and might be considered to lend themselves to revision by rote learning.

- 7.2.12 Paper 2 is designed to test source analysis. Candidates are presented with six sources, two of which are visual. The written sources are usually between three and five lines and, again, one of them is always taken from a recent GCSE textbook. The questions follow the sort of formula already described: 'What can you learn from Source A about the effects of the Russian offensive of July 1917 on the Russian soldiers?', 'Does Source C support the evidence of Sources A and B about the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor? Explain your answer.' The limitation of these questions is perhaps best illustrated by their use of visual sources. At no point are candidates specifically asked to analyse the visual sources they are required to use in their answers; in effect the examiners are assuming that candidates will instantly pick up their 'meaning'. Yet it is by no means clear that the examiners themselves necessarily understand the pictures they employ. One picture comes from the *Illustrated London News* of 29 July 1916 and shows British troops kicking a football as they launch an attack on the German lines. The mark scheme simply describes the picture as 'very good example of propaganda used by authorities to encourage support for war effort' (sic). Neither the question paper nor the mark scheme seem to be aware that this picture is based on a real incident, which involved the East Surrey Regiment on the opening day of the Battle of the

Somme.²² Neither do they take into account the point, both interesting historically and valuable educationally, that the picture was also used in German propaganda as an example of 'An English Absurdity'. A candidate's answer is reproduced in the published mark scheme which makes the inaccurate claim that 'Source D is particularly incorrect because it shows a football on the field and the British heroically charging at the enemy. This wasn't how it was.' The examiner has underlined this for credit, at Level 2 (4-6 marks out of 8), showing consideration of the value and limitations of the source. The mark scheme also suggests that for the highest marks candidates might say that the picture is 'not useful because it is inaccurate showing some men not wearing helmets', a claim which can only be speculation (helmets had only recently been introduced by July 1916) and shows a serious lack of understanding of the utility of historical sources. This example suggests that at this board formulaic assessment of historical sources can be pursued at the expense of historical accuracy, and even that historically accurate responses run the risk of being penalised.

7.2.13 Summary

Overall, the pattern of history examinations at GCSE can best be described as narrow and formulaic; some of the teachers and specialists we spoke to even described GCSE as a step backwards from Key Stage 3. The range of coverage is narrow, with the heavy concentration on the 1930s even affecting the SHP course. There is an over-reliance on visual sources at the expense of the written word, and overuse both of short 'gobbets' from written sources and of extracts from school textbooks. There is seldom an opportunity for candidates to analyse visual sources in appropriate depth.

7.3 AS and A level history

7.3.1 Content coverage

Until the 1980s A level history specifications gave no details of the precise content they covered. Thereafter, specifications included detailed lists of prescribed content divided into topics, each of which was assessed. No set number of topics was prescribed for study, though at least one awarding body advised teachers to prepare ten topics in order to ensure their students had a reasonable choice in the examination. When the six-module structure of Curriculum 2000 was introduced, all three English awarding bodies took the approach of allocating one topic per unit. The total number of topics studied at A level is therefore six.

7.3.2 There is no universally accepted definition of what constitutes a historical 'topic'. Topics are usually defined in terms of:

- a region between particular dates – e.g. *England under the Tudors, Germany between the wars, Eastern Europe since 1945*
- the career or 'age' of an individual – e.g. *the reign of Henry VIII, the age of Peel*
- a specific event – e.g. *the English Civil War, the unification of Italy*
- a theme looked at over a period of time, whether long- or short-term – e.g. *medicine through time, the decline of Spain, the growth of industrialisation, the rise of the Nazis*

7.3.3 All topic titles are open to dispute or reinterpretation, and historians frequently ignore conventional dating or topic boundaries. It is also true that topics can be extended by

adding extra background or further consequences. Nevertheless, in most cases there is a general awareness of what constitutes the main substance of any particular topic, and therefore what might constitute insufficient coverage. For example, one might legitimately argue about how many different elements ought to go into a topic on Elizabeth I, but it would be generally agreed that a treatment that omitted the Armada or the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots was insufficient and unsatisfactory.

7.3.4 A close examination of A level specifications reveals that the different awarding bodies have defined their topics in significantly different ways. At AQA and OCR the topics tend to be wider in scope than at Edexcel, as in these examples:

AS

- Germany and Russia before the First World War 1870-1914 (AQA Alternative E, Module 1)
- The Causes and Impact of the First World War c1890-1920 (OCR Module 2586)
- Russia in Revolution 1905-17 (Edexcel Unit 1)

A2

- The State, Authority and Conflict: Religious Issues in Spain 1469-1598, plus EITHER The Netherlands 1565-1609, OR Charles V and the Holy Roman Empire 1519-1556 OR Suleiman the Magnificent 1520-1566 (AQA Alternative B Module 4)
- England's Changing Relations with Foreign Powers 1485-1603 (OCR Module 2590)
- The Crisis of the Tudor State 1547-58 (Edexcel Unit 6 Synoptic unit)

7.3.5 The naming of examination topics is important. Most topics carry simple descriptive titles, but Edexcel has adopted the practice of giving some topics rather more colourful and subjective titles, such as *The Seeds of Evil: the Rise of National Socialism in Germany to 1933* and *A Very English Reformation: the Church and Henry VIII, 1529-47*. There is room here for confusion, since it might legitimately be inferred that these represent the awarding body's preferred interpretation of the periods in question, and this might therefore inhibit teachers or students from adopting other views. This is poor historical practice.

7.3.6 The synoptic unit

'Synoptic' is the adjective from 'synopsis': in other words, it describes an overview or summary. When the idea of a synoptic unit at A level was first raised, it was supposed to ensure that A level courses included an overview of the whole taught course. All three awarding bodies choose to define synoptic in terms of drawing together knowledge and skills in order to demonstrate overall historical understanding, but do so without reference to the overall subject content of the course. There is considerable inconsistency between the different awarding bodies in how they apply this definition. OCR identifies Units 2590-2591 as synoptic elements. These deal with Themes in History over roughly one hundred years. AQA designates Units 4 and 5 as synoptic units. Unit 4 covers a period of 100 years, while Unit 5 focuses on historical interpretations. Both awarding bodies therefore attach a long period to synoptic assessment, but neither uses it to survey the whole of the taught course. Edexcel nominates Unit 6 as its synoptic element. This unit involves study in depth of a short period, in some cases as short as five or six years; it is difficult to see how this can be used for synoptic assessment without a distortion of the meaning of the term.

7.3.7 To illustrate the effect these different approaches to defining topics have on the students' pattern of learning, we can take three commonly-studied historical periods and see how they can be pursued under the current specifications:

- 16th century England
- 20th century Germany
- 19th and 20th century USA

Sixteenth century England			
AS Unit	AQA	Edexcel	OCR
1		Securing the Tudor dynasty: the Reign of Henry VII	Mid-Tudor Crises 1540-58
2	Henry VII and the establishment of a secure monarchy 1483-1515	The King's Faithful Servant? The Age of Wolsey, 1509-29	The Reign of Henry VII OR Henry VIII and Wolsey 1509-29 OR Government, Politics and Foreign Affairs 1529-58 OR Church and State 1529-58 OR Social and Economic Issues 1509-58 OR Church and State 1547-1603 OR Foreign Affairs 1547-1587 OR Government and Politics in Elizabethan England 1558-1603 OR Social and Economic Issues 1547-1603
3	Aspects of Tudor England, 1483-c1529: Pretenders and Protests in the Reign of Henry VII; the career of Thomas Wolsey	A Very English Reformation: the Church and Henry VIII, 1529-47	
A2 Unit			
4		Settlement and Security: Elizabethan England, 1558-88	Elizabeth I
5	Reformation, Reaction, and the Age of Elizabeth c1525-1603	The Tudor State, 1585-1603	Rebellion and Disorder in England 1485-1603 OR England's Changing Relations with Foreign Powers 1485-1603 OR The Development of Limited Monarchy in England 1558-1689 OR Dissent and Conformity in England 1558-1689
6	The Problem of Poverty in Tudor England	The Crisis of the Tudor State, 1547-58	

7.3.8 Both AQA and OCR stipulate that courses should balance English and foreign history; the units left blank in this grid are therefore filled with units in European history, usually of the same period. The AQA course follows a broadly traditional approach, with the emphasis in the AS course on the early part of the century. Unit 5 is very large in its sweep, and would almost certainly require a whole year of teaching. The OCR course appears very comprehensive, but its coverage is severely limited by the requirement to choose between different options. It would be possible for a student to study this course, for example, and hardly touch on the reign of Henry VIII except to look at his foreign policy. This cannot be regarded as satisfactory. The Edexcel course, while appearing to offer a comprehensive coverage of sixteenth century English history, does so at the expense of any foreign history whatsoever. The only way to fit any foreign history into the course is to create unnatural gaps in the coverage of English history. A balance of English and foreign history was normal practice under the previous A level system, and has been achieved by the other two awarding bodies; it cannot be said that this Edexcel course offers sufficient breadth of coverage suitable for advanced level.

Twentieth century Germany

AS Unit	AQA (Alternative G)	Edexcel	OCR
1	Imperial and Weimar Germany, 1866-1925	The Seeds of Evil: the Rise of National Socialism in Germany to 1933	Nazi Germany 1933-45
2		The Democratic Experiment: Weimar Germany, 1918-29	
3	Germany c1925-1938: The Weimar Republic c1925-1933; the Nazi consolidation of power 1930-38	Life in Hitler's Germany, 1933-39	Germany 1919-1945 OR International Relations 1919-1939
A2 Unit			
4	Germany c1880-c1980: the Economic Modernisation of Germany c1880-c1890; the Third Reich and its Legacy 1933-1965	Expansion and Aggression: German Foreign Policy 1933-39	Chamberlain and Anglo-German Relations 1918-39
5			The challenge of German nationalism 1815-1919
6	The Reunification of Germany c1969-1990	Hitler and the Nazi State: power and Control 1933-39	

Alternative J from AQA, *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes c1848-c1956*, offers Nazi Germany as an option alongside other totalitarian regimes:

AQA Alternative J	
AS Unit	
1	The Origins and Consolidation of Totalitarian Regimes, 1918-1939: Stalinist USSR and EITHER Nazi Germany OR Fascist Italy
2	
3	The Effects of World War I, 1915-1924: The accession to power of the Bolsheviks and Lenin's regime; the Establishment of the Weimar Republic or the 'Mutilated Victory': Italy and the First World War, 1915-1920
A2 Unit	
4	Totalitarian Ideologies, Economic, Social and Foreign Policies, 1848-1956: The Soviet Union 1924-1941, OR Germany 1933-1941, OR Italy 1922-1940
5	
6	The Holocaust, 1938-45

7.3.9 AQA has tried to put the different phases of German history, and especially the Nazi period, into their wider context. It is the only awarding body that offers a unit looking at the longer-term consequences of Hitler's regime. AQA's A2 units go some way towards the sort of approach to modern German history that the German embassy has encouraged. The OCR course offers the possibility for looking at German nationalism in its long-term context, though it stops short at the First World War. Otherwise, it offers a familiar balance between domestic and foreign policy. The coverage offered by the Edexcel course, in which students can offer five units on Germany 1918-1939, must be regarded as excessive. It is noticeable that even these units omit the war years, so that there is no sense that Hitler's rule actually led the German people to disaster. Even more seriously, the Edexcel course offers Nazi Germany without the Holocaust. This cannot be regarded as appropriate for Advanced Level.

Nineteenth and Twentieth century USA

AS Unit	AQA (Alternative L)	Edexcel	OCR
1	United States Foreign Policy 1890-1991	Boom and Bust: Economy and Society in the USA 1917-33	The Origins of the American Civil War 1848-1861
2		Pursuing 'Life and Liberty': Civil Rights in the USA, 1945-68	
3	Inter-War America 1919-1941: America 1919-1929; the New Deal 1933-1941	Promise and Performance: FDR and the New Deal in the United States of America, 1933-45	The American Civil War 1861-65 OR Politics and Reform 1877-1919 OR Westward Expansion 1846-1900 OR Race Relations in the South 1863-1912

Nineteenth and Twentieth century USA

A2 Unit	AQA (Alternative L)	Edexcel	OCR
4	Aspects of Domestic Issues in the USA 1877-1989: African Americans 1877-1980; US Domestic Policy from Kennedy to Reagan 1961-1989	Containing Communism? The USA in Asia 1950-73	Roosevelt's America 1920-41 OR Stalin and the Cold War 1941-55
5			The Struggle for the Constitution 1763-1877 OR Civil Rights in the USA 1865-1980
6	The USA and Vietnam 1963-1973	Cold War to Détente 1945-90	

AQA Alternative T *Liberal Democracies c1787-c1939* deals with the earlier history of the United States in the context of developments in western Europe:

AS Unit	AQA Alternative T
1	The Emergence of Democracies 1787-1832: the making of the United States Constitution 1787-1789 OR the early stages of the French Revolution May 1789-September 1792 AND the Reform Act crisis in Great Britain 1830-32
2	
3	Aspects of British History 1832-1848: the significance of the 1832 Reform Act; Chartism 1838-1848
A2 Unit	
4	
5	The Development of Democracies: Britain 1867-1918; EITHER France 1848-1905 OR the United States 1840-1890
6	Great Britain and Appeasement in the 1930s

7.3.10 A noticeable feature here is the virtual disappearance of the colonial period and the War of Independence, which is only covered in the wider OCR unit on the Struggle for the Constitution. The lack of any American history earlier than 1917 in the Edexcel course must be regarded as a very serious omission. Edexcel's splitting of the inter-war period into two separate units is of questionable value, especially as both OCR and AQA manage to deal with it as one unit. It is therefore possible for Edexcel students to study the Wall Street Crash and the onset of the Depression without covering the New Deal by which America began to recover; equally they can study Roosevelt's policies without having studied the crisis he was actually tackling. This heavily fragmented approach cannot be regarded as satisfactory.

7.4 Examination Questions

7.4.1 In the spring of 2003 the QCA organised a task group of university historians, teachers and examiners, to compare the demands of A level papers and of the International Baccalaureate. One of the historians reported on the exercise to the Council of the Royal Historical Society:

'the exercise demonstrated to me how desperately impoverished in content, overly restrictive in approach and expected response, and directive both the teaching and examining of history at A level has become'.²³

7.4.2 Examination questions at both AS and A level fall broadly into two categories:

- Essay, or extended answer, questions
- Source-based questions

7.4.3 Essay questions

AS level

Edexcel has attempted to strike a middle ground between the demands of GCSE and of A level by setting more tasks of a descriptive nature. Thus in Unit 2 candidates complete two questions, one descriptive ('By what stages did Lutheran ideas spread across Germany in the years 1517-32?') balanced by one analytical ('Why did Luther's attack on abuses in the Church develop into a challenge to its authority by 1525?').

OCR does not offer descriptive questions; its essay questions at AS are in familiar A level format: 'To what extent was England a feudal society in this period?' 'Why did James I fail to solve England's religious problems?'

AQA essay questions follow a familiar and straightforward format: 'Explain why the Crusade of the People failed in 1096'. There are also questions asking candidates to identify factors and compare their importance, in a style familiar from previous practice: 'Explain the importance of foreign policy, in relation to other factors, in influencing the relationship between James I and the Puritans in the years 1603 to 1625'. The course essay questions, set in Unit 3, are of a similar type: 'How important was the personal contribution of Winston Churchill to the wartime coalition government in its defence of Britain between May 1940 and December 1941?'

A level

OCR questions cover a longer time-span but are not otherwise noticeably different from those set at AS: 'To what extent did the French monarchy become more powerful during the period 1498-1610?' 'How effective was opposition to governments in Russia throughout the period from 1855 to 1956?' Historians commenting in 2004 on OCR essay questions pointed out that they embodied old-fashioned thinking, and did not encourage students to engage with more recent ideas and interpretations.²⁴

Edexcel essay questions at A2 are not noticeably different either in style or in the topics asked about from those of OCR.

AQA essay questions are also similar to those asked at AS, with rather more questions asking candidates to comment on a particular view, and a heavy stress on identifying and weighing particular factors: "'External assistance rather than the efforts of the Dutch alone determined the outcome of the revolt of the Netherlands by 1609.'" To what extent do you agree with this opinion?'

7.4.4 The two most common concepts asked about in essay questions at AS are causation and analysis of success. Relatively few questions invite candidates to consider the consequences of historical events. AS essay questions often imply a hierarchy in categorising historical events and personalities. This is acceptable as a device to get the candidate thinking:

Assess the **most** important reasons for the growing prosperity of the 'middle classes' during this period.

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however it becomes questionable when it assumes that such hierarchies actually exist and do not give candidates leeway to dispute it:

Who of Canning or Palmerston (to 1841) was the **more** successful foreign secretary? Explain your answer.

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(Emphasis in the original in both cases.)

7.4.5 Source-based questions

There is considerable variety in the way the different awarding bodies set source-based exercises. At AS, Edexcel includes visual sources and extracts from A level textbooks. OCR is inconsistent: on some periods it sets exclusively primary material, and on others it includes a short extract from a modern historian. AQA sets a compulsory question with three short extracts, one of which is primary. It also sets short 'gobbets' of two or three lines, from either contemporary or modern sources, and themselves sometimes adapted. At A2 OCR sets substantial extracts from historians' accounts for its Historical Investigations paper. On its Unit 5 Edexcel is inconsistent, sometimes setting exclusively primary material and sometimes including extracts from A level textbooks. AQA in its Unit 4 sets exclusively secondary extracts, though the questions are about the period rather than about interpretations. In Unit 5 it usually sets either extracts from secondary sources or extracts from contemporary sources, though occasionally the two sorts appear on the same paper.

7.4.6 Edexcel AS Unit 1: 14 January 2002 6521 Paper 4A Votes for Women c1880-1918

Source 1 is an extract from *The Unexpurgated Case against Women's Suffrage*, by A.E. Wright and published in 1914. We are not told if this is a pamphlet or newspaper article, nor to whom it was addressed, nor who A.E. Wright might have been. Without this information there is little point to Question (a): 'What can you learn from Source 1 about the attitudes of those who opposed votes for women?' Question (d) asks the candidate to compare the value of Sources 3 and 4 as evidence for the historian enquiring into reactions to the suffrage campaigns before 1914. Since the candidate is not actually in this position any answer must be conjecture, and in any case there is insufficient information about the extracts to say anything with certainty. Except in crudely quantitative terms – *i.e.* substantial sources will often (though not always) be more useful than scraps - the question is not a particularly valuable one: it is the equivalent of asking which is the more useful of two pieces of the same jigsaw.

7.4.7 OCR AS Module 2581: 12 January 2004 Document Studies: German Reformation 1517-30

All Document Studies papers from OCR follow the same general format, though there are some inconsistencies. This particular unit gives four contemporary extracts of some six lines each; other units on the same examination paper offer three contemporary extracts and one

from a modern historian. The first question is a standard comprehension question requiring the candidate to explain a reference in one of the extracts, of a sort that in the past (and still at AQA) would have carried two or three marks; here it carries twenty. The second, for forty marks, asks how far two sources agree about Luther's views on the authority of the Bible. Since both extracts come from Luther and both reflect his firm belief in the authority of the Bible, this might be considered an odd question to ask. In effect, half of the marks for this paper are allocated to comprehension. The third question is an essay question about Luther and toleration, in which the candidate is expected to refer to the extracts. This is difficult, since only two of the extracts relate in any direct way to the extent of his tolerance. Leaving aside the specific shortcomings of the questions, this Document Studies paper does not in fact involve analysis of historical source material at all.

**7.4.8 AQA AS Unit 1 Alternative H:
The Emergence of the Super-Powers and New World Order, 1900 to 1962
4 June 2003**

The compulsory question contains three short extracts, two from contemporary speeches and one from a secondary source dated 1982. The first question asks for the explanation of a reference, for three marks. The second asks about how one source challenges another, and the third is a 'mini-essay' carrying 15 marks. In form, these questions are familiar from previous practice in source papers. The following two questions each carry a 2-line gobbet, both from textbooks. Both have been adapted, though it is not clear how. In each case the 3-mark first question requires the candidate to comment on a phrase in the 'source'. The other questions do not use source material. Such short extracts from sources may be appropriate with set texts, but it is difficult to see that they have any use beyond the most rudimentary type of stimulus material in a history examination. Calling them 'sources', especially when they have been adapted, does not appear to be warranted.

**7.4.9 Edexcel A2 Unit 5 Representation and Democracy in Britain, 1830-1931
13 June 2003**

This paper offers three short extracts, the longest of which is of seven and a half lines. Two come from contemporary sources, the third from a widely-available A level textbook. Of the two questions, one is an essay question with no defined time period, which neither relates directly to the content of any of the extracts and nor requires the candidate to use them; the second is an essay question covering the whole period 1830-1931, requiring the candidates to use the extracts in answering. In effect, these extracts are used as no more than stimulus material. This seems a low-order use of source material, more appropriate to AS than to A2.

**7.4.10 OCR A2 Module 2589 Historical Investigations 1799-1955
21 January 2004**

This paper is designed to assess candidates' grasp of different interpretations of history. For each topic four extracts are given, though there is some inconsistency in their selection: most come from recent historians' accounts, but some topics include contemporary accounts, and one topic includes a visual source. The extracts are longer than at AS. For each topic there is one question asking for a comparison of the views in two of the extracts, and then a second question asking the candidate's own view on a proposition, but requiring the candidate to refer to the given extracts. The remaining two questions are essentially standard essay

questions, with the stipulation that candidates should refer to different interpretations in answering. This last requirement, however, is not quite as clear-cut as it appears:

To what extent has Napoleon's generalship been overrated?

This appears to require a discussion of different historians' views of Napoleon's generalship – otherwise it is difficult to see by whom it might have been overrated in the first place. However, the mark scheme specifically rules this out: 'Reference to particular historians is not looked for at A level and mere description of historians' positions will not score highly. What matters is the evaluation of the material of this key debate in answer to the question 'To what extent...?' While no-one would support candidates' learning potted versions of historians' views off by heart, this stipulation appears very odd. It is difficult to see how any candidate can evaluate the material of a debate without looking at those who are actually having it.

7.4.11 AQA A2 Unit 6W Alternative U: Britain and Ireland, 1969-1998 19 June 2003

Unit 6 from AQA is the only sustained attempt by any of the three awarding bodies to bring a substantial element of contemporary history into the mainstream of A level study. In this example, there are three extracts of between ten and twelve lines, each from a 'real' source appropriate to the theme: one from *The IRA* by Tim Pat Coogan, one from a 1998 article in the *Independent*, and one from Senator George Mitchell's account of his role in the peace process. The questions do not ask candidates to compare the sources or comment on their utility, but to assess the validity of the interpretations they offer in the light of the candidates' knowledge of the topic. This seems an appropriate approach to source material of this sort within an examination format.

7.4.12 Conclusion

These examples illustrate the criticisms of current GCSE, AS and A level question-setting outlined elsewhere in this report. There are unhelpful inconsistencies in practice between awarding bodies and even within them. Content coverage is narrow, patchy and disjointed. Essay questions are competently set, but there is inconsistency in attempts to set them at an appropriate level for AS, and the familiar format has led to a very conservative approach to the historical topics themselves. The definition of 'source material' has become far too wide. In the great majority of cases, assessment of work with sources in these examination papers bears very little direct relation to actual historical practice. It is difficult to escape the conclusion that, with a few exceptions, current examination practice in history at AS and A level is highly unsatisfactory.

8. Questionnaire analysis

8.1 Teacher and pupil

At the start of the autumn term 2004, two HACP questionnaires were issued to the history departments of all secondary schools affiliated to the HA. One questionnaire was to be filled in by the department and one by up to six pupils.

8.2 We received returns from 106 schools and colleges, 77 from state secondary schools, 26 from independent schools, two from sixth form colleges and one from a College of Further Education. We received returns from 347 pupils, of whom 155 were studying history for GCSE, 70 for AS and 71 for A level. 4 were studying for the International Baccalaureate.

8.3 History department responses

8.3.1 Numbers taking history

The latest national figures for GCSE, AS and A level suggest a slight upturn in the numbers doing history (see Appendix 3). The schools we surveyed reported an average of 57 pupils studying history at GCSE, 21 at AS and 16 at A2. The difference in average group size at these three levels will also act as an indicator of the drop-out rate from GCSE to AS and from AS to A2:

Average drop-out rate from GCSE to AS	
State schools	57%
Independent schools	50%

From this we may infer that a school can expect to lose on average something over half of its history GCSE pupils in the move to AS.

Average drop-out rate from AS to A2	
State schools	35%
Independent schools	15%

AS and A2 are two parts of the same A level course, so it is perhaps not surprising that there is less of a drop-out rate than at GCSE. We would need more data before commenting on the difference in retention between independent and state schools at this level.

8.3.2 Gender balance

There is no apparent discrepancy between the numbers of boys and of girls taking the subject.

Proportions of boys and girls studying history		
GCSE	Significantly more boys	29%
	Significantly more girls	16%
	About even	55%
AS/A level	Significantly more boys	22%
	Significantly more girls	22%
	About even	56%

We might conclude, therefore, that on the whole boys and girls take the subject in similar numbers, with a slight preponderance of boys at GCSE.

8.3.3 Teaching time

Reports on school history through the twentieth century suggest that two hours' teaching time was for a long time the normal allocation in the lower secondary years. Our findings suggest that this remains the norm in Years 7 and 8, where 95% reported teaching time of 1-2 hours a week. In Year 9 some schools see a slight increase: 13% of respondent schools reported that they get 2-3 hours a week. GCSE classes average 2-3 hours a week. At AS and A2 the picture was more mixed: most (43%) reported teaching time of 4-5 hours a week; some (15%) enjoy 5-6 hours while others (21%) have to manage on 3-4 hours a week.

8.3.4 History teachers

Overwhelmingly history is taught by well qualified specialists. 89 institutions reported that all or most of their history teachers held a first degree in the subject, and 32 reported that at least one of their number held a higher degree.

8.3.5 The status of the subject

The great majority of schools which responded have been able to get some form of CPD in history, but it is clearly much easier to get this in the specific requirements of an examination course than it is for anything else, including assessment in general. 58 centres reported having had at least some difficulty in getting training in historical subject knowledge, four of whom had found it impossible. Only about half of the centres had tried to get any training in Citizenship education, and of those only 12 had found it easy to obtain.

How easy have you found it for you or for members of your department to attend CPD or INSET (in-service training) in (numbers):

	Easy	Some difficulty	Major difficulty	Impossible	Not tried
exam-specific requirements	60	30	10	1	2
general assessment	30	36	15	3	14
historical subject knowledge	28	34	20	4	14
Citizenship	12	13	14	1	56

The respondents were fairly evenly split on how they perceived history's importance within their institutions. 45% judged that it was regarded as important or even central; however over half judged that history is generally held to be of lesser importance or even irrelevant.

How would you judge the importance of history within the overall philosophy and development of your school or college? For example, does it feature in your institution's development plan? How high does it come in terms of priorities for funding?

Central importance %	Important %	Lesser importance %	Irrelevant %
5	40	49	4

The importance of subject knowledge and of CPD for developing it have already been stressed in this report. Our findings suggest that there needs to be a major shift in attitudes at the level of school management if this is to happen.

8.3.6 Teaching content

The most widely taught topic among the respondent institutions was the European Dictatorships, though there were also substantial numbers who teach nineteenth century Britain and Europe. Few or no schools reported teaching medieval or ancient history. 26 (31%) out of the 81 11-18 institutions who responded teach Nazi Germany both at GCSE and at AS/A level. There is no easy way of calculating how many of those who study the Nazis in an 11-16 school would go on to do them again at a 16-19 institution. A number of schools voiced concern about this trait: 'Very concerned that students in many schools are studying 20th century dictatorships at both GCSE and AS/A level' noted one school; 'I think it is very sad that many schools teach modern Germany at both GCSE and A level' said another. Some schools reported themselves happy with the range of content available and with the practice of repeating topics: SHP was described as a 'balanced programme of study', [which] 'allows us to teach a range at GCSE'. However, others thought 'GCSE far too narrow' in its range of content, or noted that 'GCSE does not build on the good practice in NC KS3 history'. At AS/A level some respondents appreciate the 'wide variety on offer', and one respondent replied 'Fine! – Especially with new AS/A level modules'; overall, however, there was markedly more unhappiness with AS/A level than with GCSE. 'By comparison [with GCSE] AS/A range far more limited', noted one school: 'AS/A2 structure has narrowed the range of content covered' and 'limited range within modules', noted another, while another answered the question about content 'Well, obviously it should be wider'.

8.3.7 Sourcework

With very few exceptions the schools were heavily critical of current practice in assessing work with historical sources. 'We dislike exam source work', noted one school: 'it encourages the teaching of "tricks". It has little bearing on the use of sources in genuine historical research.' Another school thought that sourcework 'forces students into stock responses and banal judgements'. Another noted that 'exam questions on sources tend to be very predictable – too little information about provenance is given,' while another wrote that 'GCSE assessment of sources has become formulaic – jump through hoops'. Many respondents commented that they thought GCSE a regression from the good work done at Key Stage 3. These comments are clearly substantiated by our own investigation of GCSE and A level source papers. One teacher felt driven to write: 'History is about transmitting a culture and its values, not about deconstructing sources and interpretations: that is media studies.' While we would not endorse this entirely, this comment does indicate the frustration of teachers who feel that source analysis has now distorted the balance of the subject.

8.3.8 Narrative

Roughly half the school responses commented on narrative, and these responses revealed something of the confusion over the meaning of the word discussed at 5.11.2; respondents were not always clear what they were being invited to comment on. A number of respondents said they did not want narrative to supplant the importance of reasoned argument, though one school pointed out that 'good analysis includes narrative, good narrative includes analysis'. Of those who did respond to this question, the majority felt that narrative was very important and that it is not, as one school put it, 'placed high enough' in the current examination system. Some schools stressed the role of narrative in attracting students to history: one school noted that 'students find a strong narrative more interesting than analytical accounts'.

8.4 Student responses

8.4.1 Enjoyment

Even allowing for the point that the students who replied to the questionnaire were always likely to be favourably disposed towards the subject, the proportions reporting that they enjoy history are striking:

	Enjoying	Not enjoying
GCSE	96%	4%
AS	98%	2%
A2	95%	5%

The main reasons cited for enjoying history were:

- It is interesting
- It raises important issues
- It is relevant to the world today
- It makes pupils think

Since the pupils who responded overwhelmingly enjoyed history, not surprisingly, they did not cite many features that they disliked. The only suggestion which attracted a significant number of responses was that 'history is not relevant to my life' (7%).

8.4.2 Styles of learning

Our findings suggest that pupils feel happiest with fairly traditional styles of learning:

I learn history most effectively when:

	%
Listening to the teacher	92
Making notes from history books	59
Watching a video in class	51
Undertaking source exercises	48
Using IT at home	46

They were least happy with:

Reading history books without taking notes	28
Reading articles in history magazines	28
Using IT at school or college	24
Visiting historic sites or museums	22
Watching history programmes at home	22

Among A level students, over half said that they enjoyed researching and writing up their Individual Studies, though girls tended to respond more positively than boys:

I learn history best when:	Boys %	Girls %
I research my Personal Study	57	64
I write up my Personal Study	53	60

8.4.3 Reading

Many complaints about school history relate to the reluctance of students to read widely. Our findings suggest that there is some substance to this, especially among boys. Only 56% of boys who responded said they learned history most effectively when taking notes from history books, and this figure dropped to 46% for boys at AS. The figures for reading history books without taking notes or for reading history magazines were even lower, with girls generally scoring less highly than boys:

	GCSE		AS level		A level	
	Boys %	Girls %	Boys %	Girls %	Boys %	Girls %
<i>I learn history best when I:</i>						
make notes from history books	56	60	46	74	70	75
read history books without taking notes	29	24	24	14	36	25
read articles in history magazines	16	6	7	19	18	21

8.4.4 Sourcework

Not surprisingly, given their liking for history, 67% of the pupils reported that they enjoyed sourcework, although this is down by some 30% on those who said they enjoy history as a whole. The figure was higher for GCSE (72%) than for A level (64%). Overall, 91% recognised work with sources as teaching useful skills. However, when asked if work with sources had made them want to continue with the subject the position was almost exactly reversed. 59% said that it had not led them to want to continue with the subject. Again, this figure was higher for A level students (61%) than for GCSE (57%). Either way, this is a very disappointing result given that these are students who actually enjoy the subject.

8.4.5 Student attitudes towards history

Contrary to what is often believed, students do not appear to regard history as a particularly difficult subject – indeed, nearly a quarter found it less difficult than other subjects - but nearly half reported that they find it time-consuming. There is some recognition that history is one of the more important subjects on the curriculum, though the figures were higher for those who regarded it as interesting:

Compared with other subjects, history students found their subject:					
	more than any other subject	more than most subjects	about the same as other subjects	less than most other subjects	least out of all subjects
Interesting	26%	55%	16%	2%	0%
Important	10%	44%	39%	6%	0%
Difficult	3%	16%	52%	23%	5%
Time-consuming	9%	37%	42%	9%	2%

8.4.6 Other topics

Students were invited to say which historical topics they would like to have had the chance to study. By its nature such a list cannot be regarded as fully comprehensive, but it does give an idea of the range of historical topics which would have an appeal in any future history curriculum 14-19. The most frequently cited topic areas were:

- ancient history, especially Egypt, Greece, Rome and Vikings
- the middle ages
- the Tudors
- the Napoleonic Wars
- the Victorians
- Asian history, especially India and Pakistan
- the two world wars
- Cold War
- Vietnam
- historical background to current affairs, especially the Middle East
- American history
- themes in history, such as medicine or warfare

9. Implications of the Recommendations

To decide what history is to be taught, at school, regional or national level, is to exercise phenomenal power. Better, then, say the nervous, not to prescribe it at all.

Christine Counsell 'Historical knowledge and historical skills: a distracting dichotomy' in James Arthur and Robert Phillips (eds) *Issues in History Teaching* (London, 2000)

- 9.1 As stated in Section 1, it is not part of our brief at this stage to compile a full list of content for history 14-19. Our recommendations therefore relate to the governing principles and criteria for the 14-19 history curriculum. We believe it to be essential that it should be underpinned by a clearly-stated philosophy, and that this philosophy should determine its shape, content, and assessment. We have tried to ensure that our recommendations are applicable to any overall curricular structure that might pertain in the future, whether a continuation of the current structure of GCSE, AS and A level, or the diploma proposals put forward by the Tomlinson Committee, or any other model that might be proposed.
- 9.2 At the very least, our proposals demand a fundamental revision of the current criteria governing examinations and assessment in history. Implicit in this is a set of changes, some of them radical, to current examinations, and a greater role for teacher-assessed work. In this we support the Tomlinson committee's call for a greater role for teacher assessment.
- 9.3 We have stressed the importance of inquiry work within history, whether a 'guided' inquiry, where a whole class might be looking at the same topic, or an individual study, where each student chooses the topic. It is recognised that this fits very well with the individual research project proposed as an important part of the 14-19 diploma by the Tomlinson Committee.

- 9.4 A number of our recommendations have implications for further research work. In a survey of this kind, we have only been able to identify issues; we have not had the time or resources to investigate all of them fully. The question of narrative's role in a future history curriculum, for example, will need careful investigation to look at how pupils might respond to the task of creating narrative, and how this might then be assessed. Subject associations can make a crucial contribution to such further research.
- 9.5 The narrowness of current provision and the importance of injecting much more diversity into the history curriculum are two of our most important concerns. In order to address this, the structure of history 14-19 will need to include clear criteria governing the selection of topics; it may also be necessary to look again at how examination topics have been defined, and perhaps to give more consideration to thematic units. In order to achieve this diversity of experience, and thus to avoid over-repetition of topics, it will be necessary to look at curricular provision in history 14-19 as a whole, even within a GCSE-AS-A level structure. As well as considering the needs of pupils who drop the subject at different stages, we need to consider carefully the cumulative experience of those pupils who carry on with the subject to A level and beyond.
- 9.6 History has immense potential for widening horizons and engaging the interest and imagination. At present, we feel that history examinations militate against this. We cannot conjure up a lost age of voracious readers and autodidacts, but we can build incentives to wider reading, both on the part of pupils and of teachers, into the current framework. The more widely teachers and pupils read, the more everyone benefits, but for this to happen subject knowledge must be given a much higher status than it currently enjoys.

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Appendix 1

The HACP team

Seán Lang (Director, HACP)

Research Fellow in History, Anglia Polytechnic University, and Honorary Secretary, Historical Association

Lecturer in Education, University of Exeter 1988-1992; Head of History, Hills Road Sixth Form College, Cambridge 1992-2001; former A level examiner and member of history committee, Associated Examining Board; written on history teaching for the Council of Europe; PhD student in history, Anglia Polytechnic University; co-editor Modern History Review; textbook author.

Nicolas Kinloch

Head of History, the Netherhall School, Cambridge, and Deputy President, Historical Association

Taught at the Teachers' College, Gashua, Nigeria 1978-81; Teacher Fellow, School of Oriental and African Studies 1990; editor, Hindsight GCSE history magazine; consultant editor, Teaching History journal; member of QCA AS/A2 accreditation panel 1999-2000; regular contributor, BBC History magazine.

Dr Tim Lomas

Principal School Improvement Adviser with the CfBT/Lincolnshire Partnership.

Former member of the National Curriculum History Working Group; consultant, trainer, author and senior examiner, specification developer and reviser at GCSE and AS/A2; former vice president of the Historical Association; member of HA primary, secondary and local history committees; vice president of the British Association for Local History.

Dr Michael Riley

Senior Lecturer in Education, Bath Spa University

Teacher of history; Head of History and Head of Humanities in state secondary schools 1985-97; Humanities Adviser, Somerset Local Education Authority 1997-2001; textbook author and consultant.

Madeline Stiles

Chief Executive Officer, Historical Association

Andrew Wrenn

County Adviser for History, Cambridgeshire LEA

Former Head of History in two comprehensives in Gloucestershire and Wiltshire; written educational material for Cambridge University Press, Pearson, HarperCollins, BBC, Channel 4 and the Lord Chancellor's Department. Member of OCR Steering Group for GCSE History hybrid qualification.

Appendix 2

Attendees at consultative meetings held at Churchill College, Cambridge, at the Institute of Historical Research, and at Selwyn College, Cambridge

Dr Mary Abbott, Anglia Polytechnic University
Vikki Askew, Deputy Head, James Allen's Girls' School
Dale Banham, History teacher, Holbrook High School
Professor David Bates, Director, Institute of Historical Research
Jim Belben, Educational Publishers' Council
Sue Bennett, Euroclio
Dr Alan Booth, Reader in History, University of Nottingham
Dr Tracy Borman, English Heritage
Dr Katharine Burn, Department of Education Studies, University of Oxford
Jamie Byrom, History Adviser, Devon Curriculum Services
Martin Collier, Head of History, Oundle School
Christine Counsell, Senior Lecturer in Education, University of Cambridge Faculty of Education
Dr Virginia Davis, History in the Universities Defence Group
Ian Dawson, Schools History Project
Professor David Eastwood, Vice Chancellor, University of East Anglia
Steven Fawkes, BBC
Bamber Gascoigne, HistoryWorld
Richard Harris, School of Education, University of Southampton
Scott Harrison, HMI, Ofsted
Dr Don Henson, Council for British Archaeology
Martin Jones, History Subject Officer, OCR
Alison Kitson, Department of Education, University of Warwick
Diana Laffin, Chairholder, Historical Association Secondary Education Committee
Dr Peter Martland, Trinity Hall, Cambridge
Alan Midgley, Education Consultant
Gary Mills, School of Education, University of Nottingham
Dan Moorhouse, Laisterdyke High School, History Teachers Discussion Forum
Professor Jinty Nelson, Royal Historical Society
Professor David Nicholls, Manchester Metropolitan University
Dr Anna Pendry, Department of Education Studies, University of Oxford
Rosemary Rees, History Education Consultant
Martin Roberts, Retired Headteacher, Cherwell School, Oxford
Viv Sanders, History Teacher
Colin Shephard, Education Consultant
Dr David Smith, Selwyn College, Cambridge
Dr John Stevenson, Group for Education in Museums
Becky Sullivan, Pearson Education
Mike Tillbrook, History Teacher
Ben Walsh, History Lecturer, Stafford College
Jane Weake, QCA

Appendix 3

Entry figures for history GCSE, A level and AS 1992-2004

GCSE	
Year	
1992	218,279
1993	223,908
1994	234,264
1995	247,929
1996	236,603
1997	230,125
1998	212,832
1999	213,395
2000	213,346
2001	218,695
2002	217,614
2003	218,565
2004	230,688

A level	
Year	
1992	46,698
1993	46,248
1994	44,730
1995	43,796
1996	43,367
1997	42,706
1998	40,515
1999	39,226
2000	39,067
2001	39,443
2002	39,533
2003	42,108
2004	43,790

AS level	
Year	
2001	38,701
2002	48,266
2003	50,026
2004	50,650

Figures from QCA

Georg-Eckert-Institut
für internationale
Schulbuchforschung
Braunschweig
-Schulbuchbibliothek-

Appendix 4

Teacher Consultation Questionnaire

Name of School or College:

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. State School | 11-16 [] | 11-18 [] |
| 2. Independent School | 11-16 [] | 11-18 [] |
| 3. Sixth Form College | [] | |
| 4. Further Education College | [] | |

How many pupils/students are currently studying history at:

- | | 0-10 | 11-30 | 31-50 | Over 50 |
|----------------------|------|-------|-------|---------|
| 5. GCSE short course | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 6. GCSE (full) | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 7. AS | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 8. A2 | [] | [] | [] | [] |

Balance between boys and girls studying history

- | | Significantly more boys | Significantly more girls | About even |
|----------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| 9. GCSE | [] | [] | [] |
| 10. AS/A Level | [] | [] | [] |

How many hours per week are devoted to history in

- | | 1-2 | 2-3 | 3-4 | 4-5 | 5-6 | 6-7 | 7-8 |
|-------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 11. Year 7 | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 12. Year 8 | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 13. Year 9 | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 14. Year 10 | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 15. Year 11 | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 16. Year 12 | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 17. Year 13 | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |

How many teachers (F/T or P/T) do you have teaching history at:

- | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10+ |
|----------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 18. GCSE | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 19. AS/A Level | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |

Of these how many are:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7+
20. F/T, teach no other subject	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
21. P/T, teach no other subject	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
22. F/T, teach other subject(s)	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
23. Which one(s)?							
English	[]						
Humanities	[]						
Languages	[]						
Sport/PE	[]						
Maths	[]						
Sciences	[]						
Other	[]	(Say which)					
24. P/T, teach other subject(s)	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
25. Which one(s)?							
English	[]						
Humanities	[]						
Languages	[]						
Sport/PE	[]						
Maths	[]						
Sciences	[]						
Other	[]	(Say which)					

Of the teachers in your history department, how many hold:

	All	Most	Some	None
26. First degree in history	[]	[]	[]	[]
27. First degree in combined honours, inc. history	[]	[]	[]	[]
28. First degree in a history-related subject (e.g. politics)	[]	[]	[]	[]
29. Further degree in history or history-related subject	[]	[]	[]	[]

How easy have you found it for you or for members of your department to attend CPD or INSET in:

	Easy	Some difficulty	Major difficulty	Impossible	Not tried
30. exam-specific requirements	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
31. general assessment	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
32. historical subject knowledge	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
33. Citizenship	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

How would you judge the importance of history within the overall philosophy and development of your school or college? For example, does it feature in your institution's development plan? How high does it come in terms of priorities for funding?

34. Central importance	[]
Important	[]
Lesser importance	[]
Irrelevant	[]

Please indicate how many teaching sets will be studying the following topics IN ANY ONE YEAR (indicate any categories which correlate or overlap with what your pupils actually study):

GCSE	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9+
35. World War I	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
36. 1920s USA	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
37. Weimar	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
38. Nazi Germany	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
39. World War II	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
40. Cold War	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
41. US Civil Rights	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
42. Vietnam	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
43. Medicine/Public Health	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
44. Crime	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
45. American West	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
46. Elizabethan England	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
47. SHP Mod. World Study	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
48. Agricultural Revol.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
49. Industrial Revol.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
50. Transport	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
51. Poor Relief	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
52. Slave Trade	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

AS/A Level	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9+
53. Early Tudors	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
54. Elizabeth I	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
55. 16 th cent. Europe	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
56. Early Stuarts	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
57. Civil War/Cromwell	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
58. Stuarts post-1660	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
59. 17 th cent. Europe	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
60. French Revolution	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
61. Napoleon	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
62. Britain 1783-1815	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
63. Britain 1815-1846	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
64. Britain 1846-1914	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
65. Britain post-1914	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
66. Europe 1815-1870	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
67. Europe 1870-1914	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
68. European dictators	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
69. Europe after 1945	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
70. USA 1776-1865	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
71. USA 1865-1917	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
72. USA 1917-1945	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
73. USA after 1945	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
74. Medieval England	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
75. Medieval Europe	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
76. Ancient Rome	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
77. Ancient Greece	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
78. Other Ancient	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Say which:					
79. Non-western topics:	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Say which:					

We would welcome any comments you might like to make about CURRENT provision for history at GCSE or AS/A Level, or both, on the following issues:

- 80. The range of content covered at GCSE and/or AS/A level
- 81. The practice of covering particular topics at both GCSE and AS/A level
- 82. The assessment of work with historical sources
- 83. The place of narrative in GCSE and/or AS/A level history
- 84. The variety of work covered at GCSE and/or AS/A level
- 85. The A level Individual Study
- 86. The quality of examination questions at GCSE and/or AS/A level
- 87. Coursework in history at GCSE and/or AS/A level
- 88. Links between history and Citizenship education

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

Student Questionnaire

This questionnaire is to find out how students taking history at GCSE, AS or A level feel about the subject. Your views are therefore very important. Please answer the following questions as honestly as you can. We are not asking for your name, and nothing you say will be reported back to your teachers.

1. Please indicate if you are male or female:
Male [] Female []
2. Which year of education are you in?
Yr10 [] Yr11 [] Yr12 [] Yr13 []
3. Are you studying history for:
GCSE short [] GCSE full [] AS [] A2 []
4. If you are studying for GCSE, which course?:
Modern World [] SHP [] Social/Economic []
5. Are you currently enjoying history?
On the whole, YES [] On the whole, NO []

Please indicate any of these statements which is true of you.

6. I like my history course because I studied the period before and liked it []
7. I like my history course because the period was new to me []
8. I find history interesting []
9. History is relevant to my life []
10. History is relevant to the world today []
11. History is good for making you think []
12. History raises important issues []
13. I like the costumes and buildings in history – the *look* of the past []
14. There are other reason(s) why I like history []
They are:
15. I have done this period of history before and didn't want to do it again []
16. I have never really understood what is going on in history []
17. History does not interest me []
18. History is not relevant to my life []
19. History is not relevant to the world today []
20. History does not really make me think []
21. History does not seem to raise any important issues []
22. I can't say why I don't like history; I just don't []
23. There are other reasons why I don't like history []
They are:

24. Please name any historical topics you would have liked to study at this level (i.e. GCSE or A level or whatever) but were not able to:

I learn history most effectively when:

	Always true	Usually true	Sometimes true	Rarely true	Never or not yet done
25. I listen to the teacher	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
26. I watch a video in class	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
27. I watch history programmes at home	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
28. I use IT at school/college	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
29. I use IT at home	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
30. I make notes from history books	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
31. I read history books without taking notes	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
32. I read articles in history magazines	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
33. I visit historic sites or museums	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
34. I undertake extended writing tasks	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
35. I undertake source exercises	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
36. (A level) I research my Personal Study	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
37. (A level) I write up my Personal Study	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
38. I enjoy source work	[]	[]	[]	[]
39. Source work teaches useful skills	[]	[]	[]	[]
40. Sourcework has made me want to carry on learning history	[]	[]	[]	[]

Compared with other subjects do you find history:

	more than any other subject	more than most subjects	about the same as other subjects	less than other subjects	least of all subjects
41. Interesting?	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
42. Important?	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
43. Difficult?	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
44. Time-consuming	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

45. If you have any other comments you would like to make about your experience of learning history, please make them below:

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

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