

# History

## Introduction

1. History is an elective subject in the senior secondary curriculum of the PSHE Key Learning Area. It aims to develop students' global outlook in their approach to past and contemporary issues that have happened around the world. History education, by promoting students' enquiry into the record of human experience from the historical perspective, constitutes an important part of a balanced education for all young people.

2. The study of history not only provides students with a global perspective that enables them to understand our human world, but also helps them to develop the ability to see the big picture and discern common phenomena across a range of contexts. History also helps to develop the intellectual capacity of students through the acquisition of the skills of historical interpretation, analysis and synthesis, and through the development of the understanding of historical concepts such as cause and effect, chronology, continuity and change. It prepares them to develop the sort of critical, reflective and independent thinking necessary to becoming informed citizens and life-long learners.

3. Taking advantage of the position of Hong Kong as a place where "East meets West", with a vital role on the international scene, students are provided with the opportunity to study a history that transcends cultural and political boundaries. They will develop a deeper understanding of both Chinese culture and the cultures of others.

## Rationale

4. The study of History at senior secondary level is based upon the students' prior knowledge of historical developments that should have been gained at junior secondary level, and will build on the skills of chronological thinking, historical comprehension, empathy and enquiry, which they will have developed, as well as on generic skills such as critical thinking and communication. After they have completed this course, students are expected to have acquired higher order thinking skills, such as historical interpretation and analysis, which will enable them to see their position in the great stream of time, and how they are linked to the whole of humankind. They should also have established values and attitudes pertaining to responsible citizenship.

5. The three-year history curriculum evolves from the new S4-5 History curriculum of 2004. While the two main themes of the existing S4-5 History curriculum remain largely intact in the Compulsory Part of the three-year curriculum, an Elective Part is added to provide a flexible structure and prepare students for further education as well as employment.

6. The new senior secondary History curriculum helps to promote the interest of students in the relationships between events and issues in the past and those in their daily lives, and to stretch their potential for future study in the fields of humanities, social sciences or even business management. An understanding of history is both useful and necessary for careers that require critical and independent thinking, e.g. for the work of an analyst or journalist.

### **Curriculum Aims**

7. The aims of the curriculum are to enable students to:
- (a) identify their position in the modern world through an understanding of the origins and development of current events;
  - (b) develop the skills involved in critical thinking, making sound judgments and effective communication during their exploration of historical issues;
  - (c) build up a spirit of impartiality and empathetic understanding, as well as develop multiple perspectives in their approach to past and contemporary events;
  - (d) understand the characteristics and values of their own culture and appreciate the shared humanity and common problems of the world's many peoples;
  - (e) develop their sense of national and global identity and become informed and rational members of the local community, the nation, and the world; and
  - (f) prepare themselves to pursue in greater depth an issue of personal interest to them, or in an area relevant to their future employment or career-oriented studies.

### **Curriculum Objectives**

8. Students are expected to develop **knowledge** and **understanding** about:
- (a) basic historical concepts, such as cause and effect, change and continuity, similarity and difference;
  - (b) how the past is represented and interpreted, and the existence of multiple perspectives in these interpretations;
  - (c) beliefs, experiences and behaviours of their own nation as well as of other nations, and how these have helped to shape the developments of the world;

- (d) inter-relationships between major events and movements in local, national, Asian and global contexts during the 20<sup>th</sup> century; and
  - (e) major developments and trends shaping the modern world.
9. Students are expected to develop the **skills** to:
- (a) differentiate between fact and opinion and detect bias, unstated assumptions and unwarranted claims, and develop a historical perspective;
  - (b) compare and interpret historical sources and to arrive at reasoned conclusions based on available evidence, and yet appreciate that historical conclusions are liable to reassessment in the light of new evidence and interpretations;
  - (c) identify and explain the extent to which historical documents and records reflect the attitudes, values, and passions of their authors and the era;
  - (d) present logical and coherent arguments supported by rational selection of historical data;
  - (e) formulate and evaluate decisions, which involves the process of collecting and analyzing information, as well as listing and ranking alternatives; and
  - (f) apply historical knowledge and skills in everyday life.
10. Students are expected to develop a range of positive **values** and **attitudes** so that they may:
- (a) appreciate the difficulties and challenges facing humankind, and the attitudes and values that affect human behaviour ;
  - (b) respect and tolerate difference of opinion, and recognize that people hold divergent experiences and beliefs and yet identify themselves with shared virtues and common aspirations;
  - (c) develop and sustain an enquiring mind towards human culture; and
  - (d) become responsible citizens with a sense of national identity and global perspective.

## Curriculum Framework

*(This part should be read in conjunction with the section “Curriculum Framework” of the Main Document. It should be noted that the curriculum framework suggested below is for initial consultation only. Feedback from the public will be taken into account and further details will be provided in the next stage of consultation.)*

11. The three-year History curriculum comprises a Compulsory Part, which is mainly composed of the two themes of the new S4-5 History curriculum, and an Elective Part, which is composed of three modules. (Refer to Appendix 1.) Students will be required to

choose ONE module in the Elective Part according to their interests and aptitudes. It is hoped that the module selected will help students to pursue a personal interest in greater depth, or in an area relevant to their future employment or career-oriented studies.

12. By bringing in the element of heritage study in Module 2 of the Elective Part, students will be able to pursue in greater depth an area that they have chosen. They will be able to concentrate on an issue of personal interest to them, find satisfaction and a sense of empowerment in the development and presentation of their own work. Students will be able to engage in work relating to heritage conservation or environmental work, building restoration or tourism, on completion of the course. (Refer to Appendix 2.)

13. On the other hand, students who would like to extend their knowledge and understanding of a particular period / event or aspect in history can opt for Module 1 Comparative Studies, or Module 3 Contemporary Studies. The former embodies a comparative approach, while the latter incorporates an issue-based enquiry approach to History.

14. The total time allocation for the History curriculum will be approximately 255 hours of lesson time, with 25 hours being allocated for various learning activities outside classrooms throughout the course. The Compulsory Part will constitute approximately 190 hours of lesson time, while the Elective Part will constitute approximately 40 hours.

### Course Description

#### ***Compulsory Part (approximately 190 hours)***

The organization of this part of the curriculum takes the form of themes subdivided into topics. This is intended to provide students with opportunities for the development of historical skills and an understanding of history in a broad political, social, economic and cultural context. Teachers should help students to organize information meaningfully, by means of overarching historical concepts like cause and effect, chronology, continuity and change, and similarities and differences, and they should enable students to develop specific historical skills such as detecting biased opinions, decision-making and non-making, and an empathetic understanding of events and issues. This part is adapted from the S4-S5 History Curriculum (2004).

**1. Introduction: The Making of the Modern World** (approximately 10 hours)

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| <p>a. Foundation of western supremacy: Scientific Revolution, Industrial Revolution, Enlightenment, Political Revolution</p> <p>b. Western expansion and formation of colonial empires</p> <p>c. Reactions to western expansion</p> <p>d. Towards international cooperation</p> |
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**2. Theme A: Modernization and Transformation of Twentieth-Century Asia**  
(approximately 90 hours)

Sub-themes	Content Focus
<b>a) Modernization and transformation of Hong Kong</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Political and institutional changes from British administration to HKSAR</li> <li>2. Development into an international city</li> <li>3. Social and cultural change and continuity</li> </ol>
<b>b) Modernization and transformation of China</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Modernization up to 1949</li> <li>2. Socialist modernization under Mao and the evolution of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the post Mao period</li> </ol>
<b>c) Modernization and transformation of Japan and Southeast Asia</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Japan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Japanese modernization in the early 20th century</li> <li>- reconstruction, recovery and growth after WWII</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Southeast Asia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- from colonies to independent countries</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

**3. Theme B: Conflicts and Cooperation in the Twentieth-Century World**  
(approximately 90 contact hours)

Sub-themes	Content Focus
<b>d) Major conflicts and the quest for peace</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. International relations from 1900 to 1914</li> <li>2. The two world wars and the peace settlements</li> <li>3. Major conflicts after WWII and attempts to make peace</li> </ol>
<b>e) The quest for cooperation and prosperity</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. International economic cooperation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- attempts in reconstruction, economic cooperation and integration in Europe after WWII</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. International social and cultural cooperation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- population and resources; environmental protection; medicine, and science and technology</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

**Elective Part** (approximately 40 contact hours)

The organization of this part of the curriculum allows students to specialize in an area or an approach to History more relevant to their needs, interests and ability level. Students are required to choose **ONE** from the following modules:-

<p><b>Module 1:</b> <b>Comparative Studies</b> <b>(Comparative Approach to History)</b></p>	<p>- This module helps students to focus on the related aspects and course of developments in different countries or regions, and highlights similarities across them to promote an understanding of general trends or patterns, while at the same time stimulating enquiry into the uniqueness of each context. Students are required to study the following topics:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Impacts of the Cold War</li> <li>2. Totalitarian states</li> </ol>
<p><b>Module 2:</b> <b>Study of Heritage in Hong Kong</b> <b>(Specific Area of study)</b></p>	<p>- This module aims to cater for students who have developed an interest in our local community and heritage education, and to prepare them for employment or job-related studies in an area relating to heritage and tourism. Students are required to study the following topics:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Traditional culture and conservation</li> <li>2. Traditional business</li> </ol>
<p><b>Module 3:</b> <b>Contemporary Studies</b> <b>(Issue-based Approach to History)</b></p>	<p>- This module helps promote students' reflective thinking and awareness of communal and world issues. Course materials are organized around an on-going issue, and students are expected not only to trace its origin and development over time, but also to understand and analyze the controversies underlying each issue. Students are required to study the following topics:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. "Terrorism"</li> <li>2. "Cultural imperialism"</li> </ol>

## Learning and Teaching

### Guiding Principles

#### 15. Developing positive values and attitudes

Some value-laden issues are involved in this curriculum, particularly in Modules 1 and 3 of the Elective Part. This curriculum embodies the notion that there are some fundamental values and attitudes commonly held in our society (such as regard for human lives and dignity; recognition of human beings' quest for peace, cooperation and prosperity).

In tackling any value-laden topic, while providing students with ample opportunities to inquire into its nature and debate it by applying high order thinking skills, teachers should also strive to guide students to arrive at a positive personal value position.

#### 16. Source-based learning and reading to learn

The use of a wide variety of historical sources, including primary and secondary written sources, statistical and visual materials, artifacts, buildings and orally transmitted information, stimulates historical enquiry and empathy, and introduces a sense of reality into the learning of history. Teachers should enable their students to acquire the skills to read with understanding, to locate, interpret and use information wisely, and to formulate an argument. In addition, students should also be taught the use of vocabulary pertinent to the topics being studied, including historical terms to express causality, chronology, logic, hypothesis and comparison. Students should be exposed to a wide range of literature that may facilitate their understanding of a certain topic. Students' reading may include general works of historians and other scholars relevant to the period, official reports, photos and memoirs and accounts of people from all walks of life, including politicians, social leaders, factory workers, etc.

#### 17. Highlighting major trends of development and historical skills

A thematic approach to the study of world history is adopted in the compulsory part of this curriculum. This aims at providing a macro perspective to students, rather than leading them to focus on individual issues. Teachers should help students to organize information meaningfully, using overarching historical concepts like cause and effect, time, continuity and change, similarities and differences, specific historical skills like detecting biased opinions, decision-making and developing students' empathetic understanding and so on. The suggested historical events are organized under overarching historical skills, and are as follow:-

#### **Examples of historical events organized under overarching historical skills:**

##### **Decision making**

- ✧ Mao's inauguration of the Cultural Revolution
- ✧ Kennedy's decision in the Cuban missile crisis

##### **Empathetic understanding**

- ✧ US soldiers during the Vietnam War
- ✧ Palestinians in the occupied zone

**Discerning the role of individuals VS circumstantial factors**

- ✧ Deng Xiaoping and the modernization of China
- ✧ Gorbachev and the disintegration of the USSR

**Identifying turning points in History**

- ✧ 1911 as turning point in Chinese history
- ✧ End of WWII as turning point in world history

**Assessment**

*(This part should be read in conjunction with the section “Assessment” of the Main Document.)*

18. Assessment is the practice of collecting evidence of student learning. The aims of assessment are to improve learning and teaching as well as to recognize the achievement of students. The assessment design will align with curriculum aims, design and learning processes of the subject.

Internal Assessment

19. Internal assessment refers to the assessment practices that schools employ as part of the learning and teaching strategies during the three-year senior secondary studies in History. In designing internal assessment for the subject, teachers should maintain a proper balance between the formative and summative functions of assessment. A diversity of assessment modes should be adopted, so that students are given opportunities to develop and demonstrate the full range of learning outcomes of the curriculum, including those of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. A variety of purposeful activities can be arranged to stimulate students’ interest as well as for assessment purpose. These can involve individual response, class participation, discussion, debate, role-play, simulation, field study and visits. All these activities, if appropriately structured and well sequenced, can develop students’ mastery of historical concepts and skills, and enable the building-up of a profile of students’ attainment in the various sectors. Excessive drills and tests should be avoided, as they may have a negative impact on learning motivation, and encourage students to focus on a narrow set of learning outcomes.

Public Assessment

20. Public assessment of History leads to a qualification in the subject to be offered by the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority. In the public assessment of History, a

standards-referenced approach will be adopted for grading and reporting student performance. The purpose of this approach is to recognize what each student can do in this subject at the end of the 3-year senior secondary education. Each student's performance will be matched against a set of performance standards, rather than compared to the performance of other students. It makes the implicit standards explicit by providing specific indication of student performance. Descriptors will be provided for the set of standards at a later stage.

21. Public assessment will include a written examination component and a School-based Assessment (SBA) component. The SBA component will take up 30% of the total weighting of the public assessment. This is similar to the existing S4-5 curriculum, which consists of a written paper that carries 80% of the total subject marks and a school-based assessment (SBA) portfolio that carries 20% of the total subject marks. The merits of adopting SBA are as follows:

- (a) SBA provides a more valid assessment than an external written examination alone, since it can cover a more extensive range of learning outcomes through employing a wider range of assessment modes than is possible in a written examination.
- (b) SBA enables the sustained work of students to be assessed. It provides a more comprehensive picture of student performance throughout the period of study rather than their performance in a one-off examination alone.

22. It should be noted that SBA is not an “add-on” element in the curriculum. Assessing students' performance through practices such as class discussion and class observation is a normal in-class and out-of-class activity. The modes of SBA selected for History will be appropriate to the learning objectives and processes that are to be assessed. The design and implementation of SBA should avoid unduly increasing the workload of both teachers and students.

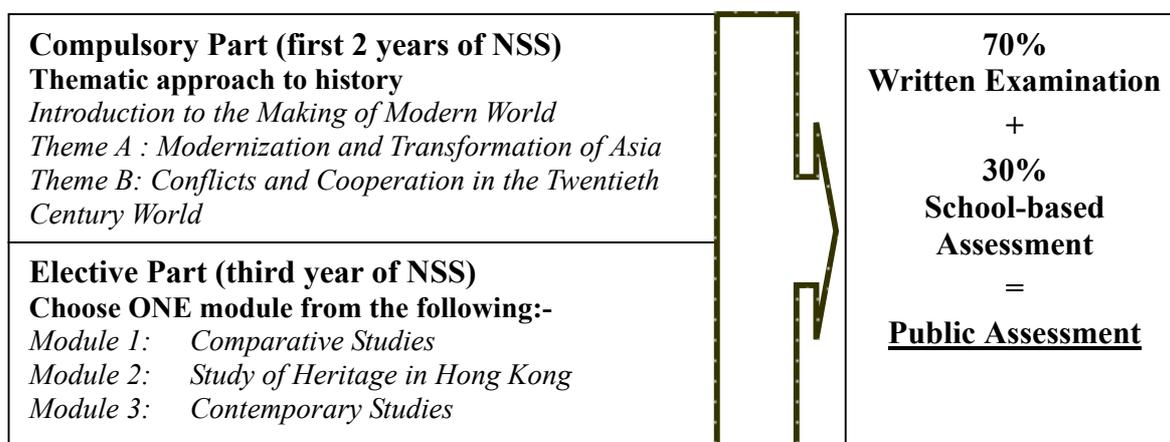


Diagram 1. The proportions of written examination and SBA in the Senior Secondary History Curriculum

## Supporting Measures

23. The Curriculum Development Institute (CDI) will provide the following measures to support the implementation of the New Senior Secondary History Curriculum:

### Development of Curriculum Resources

24. The Curriculum Development Council and the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority will jointly issue a Curriculum and Assessment Guide for the subject. Supporting materials will also be developed to facilitate the school-based implementation of the curriculum. These materials will include exemplary learning activities, learning and teaching materials, a glossary, a reference list, etc. They will also be made available when ready on the CDI's website for Personal, Social and Humanities Education. (<http://www.emb.gov.hk/cd>)

### Professional Development Programmes for Teachers

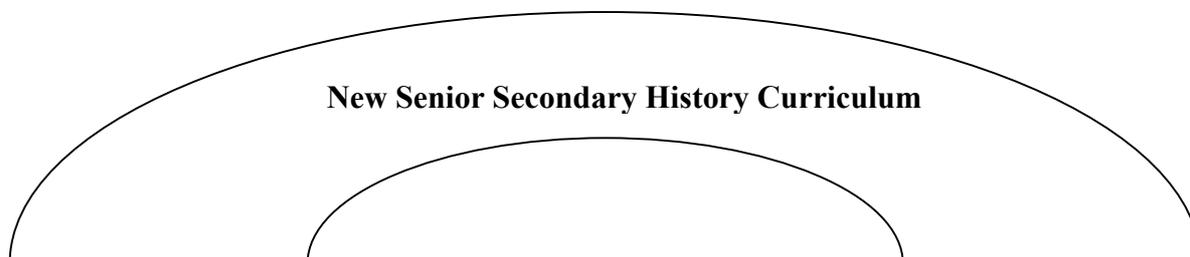
25. The Curriculum Development Institute and the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority will organize a series of professional development programmes for teachers of the subject. The structure of the programmes will be as follows:

- ✧ Rationale of the New Senior Secondary Curriculum
- ✧ Updating of curriculum knowledge on compulsory part
- ✧ Updating of curriculum knowledge on elective part
- ✧ Learning and teaching and the use of curriculum resources
- ✧ Assessment (including SBA)

26. Seminars and workshops on special topics will also be organized regularly in response to the needs of teachers.

27. More details of the above support measures will be announced through the CDI's website for Personal, Social and Humanities Education (<http://www.emb.gov.hk/cd>). Teachers are also invited to check the EMB Training Calendar regularly for information on professional development programmes.

**The proposed framework of the New Senior Secondary History curriculum**



**New Senior Secondary History Curriculum**

**Compulsory Part (first 2 years of NSS)**

(Thematic Approach to History)

**- Introduction – The making of Modern World**

**- Theme A + Theme B of current S4 and S5 History Curriculum**

- focus on the overview of major historical developments in Hong Kong, China, Asia and the World

**Elective Part (third year of NSS)**

**Electives** (Choose ONE from the following modules)

**Module 1: Comparative Studies** (Comparative Approach to History)

- Provides students with a focus on developments in different countries or regions, and highlights similarities across them to promote an understanding of general trends or patterns, while at the same time stimulating enquiry into the uniqueness of each context.

**Module 2: Study of Heritage in Hong Kong** (Specific area of Study)

- Caters for students who have developed an interest in our local community and heritage education, and prepares them for employment or job-related studies in an area relating to heritage tourism / museum studies / archaeology etc.

**Module 3: Contemporary Studies** (Issue-based Approach to History)

- Promotes students' reflective thinking and awareness of communal and world issues and provides a forum for them to understand and analyze the controversies underlying each issue.

The Organization of the History Curriculum at Senior Secondary level

