**Historical Concepts**

**Cause and effect**

Used by historians to identify chains of events and developments over time, short term and long term.

**Contestability**

Occurs when particular interpretations about the past are open to debate, for example, as a result of a lack of evidence or different perspectives.

**Continuity and change**

Aspects of the past that remained the same over certain periods of time are referred to as continuities. Continuity and change are evident in any given period of time and concepts such as progress and decline may be used to evaluate continuity and change.

**Empathy**

Empathy is an understanding of the past from the point of view of a particular individual or group, including an appreciation of the circumstances they faced, and the motivations, values and attitudes behind their actions.

**Evidence**

In History, evidence is the information obtained from primary and secondary sources that is valuable for a particular investigation. Evidence can be used to help construct a historical narrative, to support a hypothesis or to prove or disprove a conclusion.

**Perspective**

A person’s perspective is their point of view, the position from which they see and understand events going on around them. People in the past may have had different points of view about a particular event, depending on their age, gender, social position and their beliefs and values. Historians also have perspectives and this can influence their interpretation of the past.

**Significance**

The importance assigned to particular aspects of the past, for example something such as an issue, event, development, person or place.

**Primary and secondary sources**

In History, primary sources are objects and documents created or written during the time being investigated, for example during an event or very soon after. Examples of primary sources include official documents, such as laws and treaties; personal documents, such as diaries and letters; photographs; film and documentaries. These original, firsthand accounts are analysed by the historian to answer questions about the past.

Secondary sources are accounts about the past that were created after the time being investigated and which often use or refer to primary sources and present a particular interpretation. Examples of secondary sources include writings of historians, encyclopaedia, documentaries, history textbooks, and websites.