

GCSE



WJEC GCSE History

Approved by Qualifications Wales

Guidance for Teaching: Unit 2 Option 2.3

Teaching from 2026

For award from 2028

Version 2 - February 2025



This Qualifications Wales regulated qualification
is not available to centres in England.

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SUMMARY OF AMENDMENTS

Version	Description	Page number
2	Amended to, awarded for the first time in Summer 2028.	1

Introduction

The WJEC GCSE History has been approved by Qualifications Wales and is available to all centres in Wales. It will be awarded for the first time in Summer 2028, using grades A* to G.

Aims of the Guidance for Teaching

The principal aim of the Guidance for Teaching is to support teachers in the delivery of WJEC GCSE History and to offer guidance on the requirements of the qualification and the assessment process. The Guidance for Teaching is **not intended as a comprehensive reference**, but as support for teachers to develop stimulating and exciting courses tailored to the needs and skills of their learners. The guide offers possible classroom activities and links to useful resources (including our own, freely available digital materials and some from external sources) to provide ideas for immersive and engaging lessons.

Additional ways that WJEC can offer support:

- sample assessment materials and mark schemes
- professional learning events
- examiners' reports on each unit
- direct access to the subject officer
- free online resources
- Exam Results Analysis
- Online Examination Review.

Qualification Structure

WJEC GCSE History consists of four units. The combination of options selected for Units 1, 2 and 3 must include one medieval, one early modern and one modern unit.

In Unit 4, centres can choose to repeat a time period previously studied in Units 1, 2 or 3. **However, the topics chosen for study in Unit 4 must not replicate or overlap with the content of any of the other selected units.**

The qualification is unitised and does not contain tiering. There is no hierarchy to the order the units should be taught.

	Unit title	Type of Assessment	Weighting
Unit 1	An in-depth study on Welsh history	Written examination	30%
Unit 2	An in-depth study on European and/or World history	Non-examination assessment	20%
Unit 3	A study of a period in World history	Written examination	30%
Unit 4	A changing society	Non-examination assessment	20%

Assessment

Summary of Assessment Unit 2

Unit 2: An in-depth study on European and/or World history

On-screen non-examination assessment: 3 hours

20% of qualification

80 marks

Learners will study one of the following six historical topics to undertake an in-depth study that will provide them with an understanding of an issue in European and/or world history.

Medieval

- 2.1 Genghis Khan c.1162–c.1227: a case study in medieval imperialism
- 2.2 The Black Death c.1330–c.1360: a case study in medieval society

Early Modern

- 2.3 The Spanish Conquest of the Aztecs c.1492 – c.1525: a case study in early modern colonialism
- 2.4 Süleyman I c.1520–c.1566: a case study in early modern imperialism

Modern

- 2.5 The Third Reich c.1933 – c.1945: a case study in modern nationalism
- 2.6 Afghanistan c.1979–c.2001: a case study in modern international relations

For the non-examination assessment, learners will undertake a historical enquiry, providing a focused response on a specific issue.

Learners will complete the assessment of Unit 2 digitally through WJEC's e-assessment platform.

Unit 2 Assessment objectives and weightings

AO2	Apply knowledge and understanding to historical concepts such as cause and consequence, continuity and change, similarity and difference, and significance	5%
AO3	Analyse, evaluate, or make judgements on source material, historical interpretations and historical debates, synthesising these strands where appropriate	5%
AO4	Select, use and apply skills and techniques in practice to undertake historical enquiries.	10%

Overview of Unit 2: Option 2.3

An in-depth study on European and/or World history (20% of the qualification)

The purpose of Unit 2 is to provide an understanding of an issue in European and/or world history in depth, via the study of historical sources and interpretations.

Learners will study one of six historical topics to undertake an in-depth study that will provide them with an understanding of an issue in European and/or world history. They will then undertake a historical enquiry based on their selected historical topic.

Learners should be able demonstrate skills of analysis and evaluation when engaging with sources that relate to the selected historical topic and historical interpretations that encompass contrasting views of events and people.

Learners should also be able to apply their knowledge and understanding of the following historical concepts in the context of their chosen historical topic:

- continuity and change
- similarity and difference
- significance and impact
- cause and consequence.

Learners should be able to select, use and apply skills and techniques used to undertake historical enquiries, including:

- gaining an overview of a specified topic
- gathering evidence to develop an understanding of the history and related debates
- summarising the key points and debates
- reviewing knowledge and forming a hypothesis linked to a specific question
- selecting, analysing, evaluating and using evidence
- planning and compiling a response to a specific question
- developing a critical self-appraisal of their performance in the task.

Time period	Option	
Early Modern	2.3	The Spanish Conquest of the Aztecs, c.1492–c.1525: a case study in early modern colonialism
	2.3.1	The Spanish expansion into the “New World”
	2.3.2	Aztec civilisation
	2.3.3	Hernán Cortés
	2.3.4	The defeat of the Aztecs
	2.3.5	The effects of the Spanish conquest

Scheme of Learning for Option 2.3

This scheme of learning is provided as an illustrative example. It is designed to offer structure and inspiration but allows for adaptation to meet the unique needs, preferences, and dynamics of individual classes. Teachers are encouraged to modify elements as needed to align with their students' abilities and learning goals.

For each section of content in this unit, WJEC is also providing blended learning resources and knowledge organisers.

These can be found on: <https://resources.wjec.co.uk/>

2.3 Background: the emergence of exploration from the Iberian Peninsula (Each option begins with a background section. These sections are intended to provide learners with necessary context in order to access the historical topic. Learners will not be directly assessed on the content of the background sections).				
Learners should be aware of:	Knowledge	Activities and Outcomes	Resources	Suggested timing (hours)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the power of Spain and Portugal, and their searches for new routes to Asia 	The events of 1492 with a New Spain and the New World.	<p>Activity: Create a timeline of key events of the Spanish going into the New World. This activity will be revisited and built upon in section 2.3.3.</p> <p>Outcome: Learners can demonstrate their understanding of the New Spain and the New World.</p> <p>Advanced activity: Include 'key moments' to their timelines where more in-depth facts are included about the key events.</p> <p>Advanced outcome: Learners can show a deeper understanding of key developments.</p>	Book(s): K. Jarvis and R. Woff, <i>Aztecs and the Spanish Conquest 15-19-1535</i> (2022) Map(s): Treaty of Tordesillas Atlas - Geography, Cartography, Navigation Website(s): The Spanish Conquest of the Americas	1 hour

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the role of Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon in supporting the voyages of discovery and attitudes toward Indigenous Peoples and the Treaty of Tordesillas, 1494. 	<p>Examples of key voyages of discovery (from Spain) supported by the monarchs.</p> <p>The treatment of the peoples of the Caribbean.</p> <p>The treatment of the Indigenous Peoples in Central America.</p> <p>An understanding of the agreement between Spain and Portugal in the Treaty of Tordesillas.</p>	<p>Activity: Create a placemat to outline the voyages of discovery, the attitudes and treatment towards Indigenous Peoples and the Treaty of Tordesillas, 1494.</p> <p>Outcome: Learners can demonstrate that they understand the role of the Spanish in the Caribbean and the initial encounters with the Indigenous Peoples in South America and the role of the Spanish monarchs in supporting this.</p> <p>Advanced activity: Create a summary of the impacts of these events.</p> <p>Advanced outcome: Learners can summarise the impact of these first meetings on the expansion of the Spanish takeover.</p>	<p>Book(s): K. Jarvis and R. Woff, <i>Aztecs and the Spanish Conquest</i> 15-19-1535 (2022)</p> <p>Website(s): The Spanish Conquest of the Americas</p> <p>Article(s): Who were Ferdinand and Isabella: The husband and wife who transformed medieval Spain? - History Skills</p> <p>Treaty of Tordesillas - World History Encyclopaedia</p> <p>Video(s): Columbus, Vasco da Gama, and Zheng He - 15th Century Mariners: Crash Course World History</p>	1 hour
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2.3.1 The Spanish expansion into the “New World”				
Learners should understand:	Knowledge	Activities and Outcomes	Resources	Suggested timing (hours)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reasons for Spanish expansion overseas, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> political, economic and religious changes technical advances in seafaring and map making. 	<p>Why the Spanish wanted more land overseas.</p> <p>Political, economic and religious factors that led to the expansion.</p> <p>The advances in seafaring and map making for the Spanish.</p>	<p>Activity: Working in small groups, explore a carousel/marketplace activity to summarise key information about the reasons for Spanish expansion under the highlighted subtopics of political, economic and religious changes.</p> <p>Summarise the technical advances in seafaring and map making.</p> <p>Outcome: Learners can demonstrate that they understand the reasons for Spanish expansion overseas and the impact this had.</p> <p>Advanced activity: Analyse the significance of political, economic and religious changes and technical advances in seafaring and map making.</p> <p>Advanced outcome: Learners can demonstrate their understanding of how these changes and advances created a base for a Spanish Empire.</p>	<p>Book(s): K. Jarvis and R. Woff, <i>Aztecs and the Spanish Conquest 15-19-1535</i> (2022)</p> <p>Website(s): The Spanish Conquest of the Americas</p> <p>Article(s): Spanish colonisation: Overview of the Spanish Empire's expansion and impact - ourhistory.org.uk</p> <p>3.1: Age of Exploration - Humanities LibreTexts</p> <p>Video(s): How The Spanish Empire Became The World's First Superpower</p>	1 hour

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Spanish conquest of the Caribbean, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the peoples of the Caribbean – exploitation of the people and the land • reasons for Spanish expansion into Mexico. 	<p>The Taino and the Caribs (native peoples of the Caribbean).</p> <p>The enslavement of the Indigenous Peoples to farm the land.</p> <p>The lack of gold (identified by 1519) in the Caribbean and the appeal of central America.</p>	<p>Activity: Groupwork presentation activity. Each group is given a different theme to research in relation to the Spanish conquest of the Caribbean, for example, the treatment of Indigenous Peoples, and then feeds back to the rest of the class. The rest of the class should take notes during the presentations.</p> <p>Outcome: Learners can demonstrate that they understand the way the Spanish took over the Caribbean and used the people and land to their own benefit. Learners can also demonstrate that they understand why the Spanish moved onto Central America, namely Mexico.</p> <p>Advanced activity: Learners can be given challenge questions to encourage thinking about other reasons for Spanish expansion e.g. why would Roman Catholic missionaries be attracted to the Caribbean?</p> <p>Advanced outcome: Learners can explore other reasons for the Spanish conquest e.g. religion.</p>	<p>Book(s): K. Jarvis and R. Woff, <i>Aztecs and the Spanish Conquest</i> 15-19-1535 (2022)</p> <p>Website(s): The Spanish Conquest of the Americas</p> <p>Article(s): Spanish Caribbean, 1492–1550 - Oxford Research Encyclopaedia of Latin American History</p>	<p>1 hour</p>
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2.3.2 Aztec civilisation				
Learners should understand:	Knowledge	Activities and Outcomes	Resources	Suggested timing (hours)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the main features of Aztec civilisation, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> methods of rule, beliefs, tributes, codices and sacrifice wealth, agriculture, trade and warfare. 	<p>An understanding of the structure of Aztec society, religious beliefs in Gods and ancestral myths, tributes (taxes) and human sacrifice.</p> <p>The distribution of wealth, the role of trade, the role of agriculture and reasons and methods of warfare.</p>	<p>Activity: Learners to complete an independent, document-based enquiry, using contemporary sources and articles to investigate the identified features of Aztec civilisation.</p> <p>Outcome: Learners can demonstrate that they understand the main features of Aztec civilization.</p> <p>Advanced activity: Assess the reliability of the source materials selected for the enquiry by critically analysing their strengths and limitations.</p> <p>Advanced outcome: Learners can demonstrate that they are able to make strong conclusions using the document-based enquiry.</p>	<p>Book(s): K. Jarvis and R. Woff, <i>Aztecs and the Spanish Conquest 15-19-1535</i> (2022)</p> <p>Website(s): The Spanish Conquest of the Americas Governance of the Aztec Empire - History Crime and Punishment in the Aztec Empire History Hit Aztec religion Practices, Beliefs, & gods Britannica The Aztec Empire: Society, Politics, Religion, and Agriculture - History </p>	3 hours

			<u>Exploring the Rich History of the Aztec Civilization</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the significance of Tenochtitlan, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> districts of the city the sacred precinct. 	<p>Know the layout of the city including the four main causeways, chinampas and the sacred precinct.</p> <p>From this, develop an understanding of the significance of the city.</p>	<p>Activity: Learners can use the map and information provided to identify key areas and add descriptions of the areas identified.</p> <p>Outcome: Learners can demonstrate that they understand the significance of Tenochtitlan as a city by exploring its layout and its important features.</p> <p>Advanced activity: Using the key information collated, learners can consider why Tenochtitlan was so significant to the Aztecs and to the Spanish when they first visited.</p> <p>Advanced outcome: Learners understand the significance of Tenochtitlan to the Aztecs and the Spanish.</p>	<p>Book(s): K. Jarvis and R. Woff, <i>Aztecs and the Spanish Conquest</i> 15-19-1535 (2022)</p> <p>Website(s): <u>The Spanish Conquest of the Americas</u></p> <p>Map(s): <u>The Map: Tenochtitlan, 1524 History Today</u></p>	1 hour

2.3.3 Hernán Cortés				
Learners should understand:	Knowledge	Activities and Outcomes	Resources	Suggested timing (hours)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the role of Cortés in the conquest of the Aztecs, including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> relations with Velazquez Cortés's expedition to Mexico. 	<p>Early expeditions by Velazquez to Central America.</p> <p>The relationship between Velazquez and Cortés.</p> <p>Cortés's expedition to Mexico.</p>	<p>Activities: Build on the timeline from the first lesson(s) to track the movements of the Spanish in Central America.</p> <p>Develop another timeline that traces and discusses key events in the evolving relationship between Cortés and Velázquez.</p> <p>Using historical maps, trace Cortés's journey from Cuba to Tenochtitlán. Highlight key events such as forming alliances with the Tlaxcalans or battles.</p> <p>Outcome: Learners can demonstrate that they understand the involvement of Velazquez and Cortés in the conquest of more land for the Spanish.</p> <p>Learners can visualise and outline the key events of Cortés's expedition to Mexico.</p> <p>Advanced activity: Compare and contrast the roles of Cortés and Valazquez and make a conclusion on who was more significant in conquering the Aztecs.</p>	<p>Book(s): K. Jarvis and R. Woff, <i>Aztecs and the Spanish Conquest 15-19-1535</i> (2022)</p> <p>Website(s): The Spanish Conquest of the Americas BBC - History - Hernando Cortés Biography of Diego Velazquez de Cuellar, Conquistador</p> <p>Video(s): How the Spanish Explored & Colonized the Americas?</p> <p>Map: Hernan Cortes Explorations Map Cortes map Mexico</p>	2 hours

		<p>Advanced outcome: Learners can decide who had a leading role in the conquest of the Aztecs.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the relationship with Indigenous Peoples, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the role of Malinche • alliances and disputes with Indigenous Peoples. 	<p>The events of 1519 and the alliances and disputes made with Indigenous Peoples.</p> <p>The role of Malinche (also known as Dona Marina) in translating deals between the Spanish and the Indigenous Peoples.</p>	<p>Activity: Split learners into groups. Give half of them information on positive relations and the other half information on negative relations. Give learners time to record key information and make arguments for a debate on ‘all relations between the Spanish and Indigenous Peoples were damaging’. Once the debate is over learners can be placed in pairs to swap information.</p> <p>Outcome: Learners can demonstrate that they understand the positive and negative depictions of relations between the Spanish and the Indigenous Peoples.</p> <p>Advanced activity: Answer the following question: ‘What is the significance of the Spanish relations with the Indigenous Peoples?’ In your answer you should specifically mention the role of Malinche.</p> <p>Advanced outcome: Learners can come to a conclusion on the significance of Spanish relations with Indigenous Peoples, specifically the role of Malinche.</p>	<p>Book(s): K. Jarvis and R. Woff, <i>Aztecs and the Spanish Conquest 15-19-1535</i> (2022)</p> <p>Website(s): The Spanish Conquest of the Americas The Controversial Role of La Malinche in the Fall of the Aztec Empire: Traitor or Hero? Ancient Origins La Malinche: The Native Woman Who Helped Cortés Conquer Mexico</p>	2 hours

2.3.4 The defeat of the Aztecs				
Learners should understand:	Knowledge	Activities and Outcomes	Resources	Suggested timing (hours)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the ransom of Moctezuma II, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the expulsion of the Spanish the Siege of Tenochtitlan. 	<p>Who was Moctezuma II?</p> <p>Why was he arrested?</p> <p>Issues between the Spanish and the Aztecs leading to the Siege of Tenochtitlan.</p>	<p>Activities: Create a profile of Moctezuma II using the information in the suggested articles.</p> <p>Make a flow chart of the key events leading to the ransom of Moctezuma II (using the suggested resources).</p> <p>Outcome: Learners can demonstrate that they understand the ransom of Moctezuma II.</p> <p>Advanced activity: Consider the issues and opportunities that these key events provided for the Spanish, and create a table to summarise these impacts.</p> <p>Advanced outcome: Learners can consider the impact of these events on the Spanish conquest of the Aztecs.</p>	<p>Book(s): K. Jarvis and R. Woff, <i>Aztecs and the Spanish Conquest 15-19-1535</i> (2022)</p> <p>Website(s): The Spanish Conquest of the Americas</p> <p>Article(s): Montezuma II: Aztec Emperor - Britannica</p> <p>10 Facts About Moctezuma II, the Last True Aztec Emperor History Hit</p>	1 hour

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the defeat of the Aztecs, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the fall of Tenochtitlan • the establishment of Mexico City. 	<p>How Tenochtitlan fell.</p> <p>How the Spanish changed Tenochtitlan into Mexico City.</p>	<p>Activity: Learners should create a mind map about the defeat of the Aztecs using the suggested resources.</p> <p>Outcome: Learners can demonstrate that they understand the events that led to the defeat of the Aztecs.</p> <p>Advanced activity: Colour code the information into failures of the Aztecs and successes of the Spanish.</p> <p>Advanced outcome: Learners can investigate the impact these events had on the building of the Spanish Empire.</p>	<p>Book(s): K. Jarvis and R. Woff, <i>Aztecs and the Spanish Conquest</i> 15-19-1535 (2022)</p> <p>Website(s): The Spanish Conquest of the Americas</p> <p>Podcast: Fall of the Aztec Empire - Dan Snow's History Hit - Apple Podcasts</p>	1 hour
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2.3.5 The effects of the Spanish conquest				
Learners should understand:	Knowledge	Activities and Outcomes	Resources	Suggested timing (hours)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the social and cultural impact of the conquest on the Aztecs, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the treatment of Indigenous Peoples and the impact of disease cultural changes and the imposition of Christianity. 	<p>Conversion to Christianity and the role of the mendicant friars.</p> <p>The transformation of the population and society.</p> <p>The impact of 'new' diseases on the Indigenous Peoples.</p>	<p>Activity: Use the information from the suggested resources to create a set of diagrams with detailed labels to show the new structures under the Spanish, such as conversion to Christianity and the role of the mendicant friars.</p> <p>Outcome: Learners can demonstrate that they understand how Mexico changed under the Spanish.</p> <p>Advanced activity: Create a table that shows both the positive and negative outcomes for the Spanish.</p> <p>Advanced outcome: Learners can show that they understand the social and cultural impact of the conquest on the Spanish Empire.</p>	<p>Book(s): K. Jarvis and R. Woff, <i>Aztecs and the Spanish Conquest 15-19-1535</i> (2022) Pages 84-96</p> <p>Website(s): The Spanish Conquest of the Americas</p> <p>Podcast: Fall of the Aztec Empire - Dan Snow's History Hit - Apple Podcasts</p>	2 hours

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the economic and political impact of the conquest, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the impact on the Aztecs, such as the encomienda system and royal authority • the impact on Europe, including increased trade, wealth and the consequences of inflation. 	<p>The encomienda system. Royal authority and the establishment of governors of the new Spain. The expansion of trade routes.</p>	<p>Activity: Use the information from the suggested resources to create a set of diagrams with detailed labels to show the new structures of society, including the encomienda system and royal authority.</p> <p>Use these diagrams to examine the impact of these new structures on the Aztecs and Europe.</p> <p>Outcome: Learners can demonstrate that they understand how Mexico changed under the Spanish, and the economic and political impact of the conquest on the Spanish Empire.</p> <p>Advanced activity: Facilitate a debate on whether the benefits of increased trade and wealth outweighed the impacts on indigenous societies.</p> <p>Advanced outcome: Learners can develop a nuanced understanding of the conquest and its far-reaching effects.</p>	<p>Book(s): K. Jarvis and R. Woff, <i>Aztecs and the Spanish Conquest 15-19-1535</i> (2022), pages 84-96</p> <p>Website(s): The Spanish Conquest of the Americas</p> <p>Encomienda - World History Encyclopedia</p>	<p>2 hours</p>
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Learning Experiences

Learners should be encouraged to consider the following learning experiences and skills to further develop their understanding, appreciation and awareness of the subject content. Information in the table below provides opportunities for teachers to integrate the learning experiences into delivery.

Learning Experience	Exemplification of Learning Experience
Make appropriate use of digital technology when completing the qualification, for example through accessing historical source material digitally	<p>Learners should have the opportunity to access online archives from around the world. This will enable them to access a range of historical source materials such as letters, diaries or government documents.</p> <p>Learners may also make use of digital technology to research the topic of study and to further their understanding of the historical context.</p> <p>Learners will also have the opportunity to complete their historical enquiry digitally, as part of the assessment of this unit.</p>
Participate in educational visits in person or digitally	<p>Virtual visit to Tenochtitlan – there are several videos available for this on YouTube, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenochtitlan -The Venice of Mesoamerica (Aztec History) • Tenochtitlan // Aztec empire (15 century)
Develop empathy, tolerance, compassion and curiosity through studying different historical contexts	<p>Opportunities for this learning experience can be found throughout this unit.</p> <p>There are opportunities for learners to explore curiosity in this unit. The Spanish are curious to find out how they can expand their empire but they do it through a violent way.</p> <p>Learners also have opportunities to consider and reflect on the experiences of the Indigenous Peoples during this period.</p>
Engage in collaborative working	<p>There are opportunities for learners to engage in collaborative working in when studying this unit. Some suggestions for collaborative working can be found in sections 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.3.3 of the Scheme of Learning.</p>

Opportunities for embedding elements of the Curriculum for Wales

Curriculum for Wales Strands Cross-cutting Themes	
Local, National & International Contexts	Option 2.3 Early Modern: The Spanish Conquest of the Aztecs c.1492 – c.1525 allows centres and learners to explore International Contexts through studying the building of an Empire.
Relationships and Sexuality Education	In this unit, learners will explore relationships by exploring the treatment of the Aztec people by the Spanish e.g. the relationship between Malinche and Cortes.
Human Rights Education and Diversity	In this unit, learners will explore Human Rights, Education and Diversity by exploring the treatment of the Aztec people by the Spanish.
Careers and Work-Related Experiences	There are opportunities to explore careers during the early modern period through exploring the development of jobs.

Cross-curricular Skills – Literacy

There are many opportunities to include Literacy in GCSE History. These opportunities include the analysis of source material, extended writing opportunities, vocabulary development, debating and discussion. These opportunities are important to learners because they will develop cross-curricular skills which underpin the four purposes of the Curriculum for Wales, as well as communication skills which can be used across subjects and prepare them for future education or employment.

Below are some examples of how Literacy can be embedded into teaching and learning for GCSE History.

	<p>Learners will have the opportunity to assess the accuracy and reliability of source material and share views through discussion and verbal questioning techniques when being taught the specification content.</p>
Listening	<p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners are encouraged to debate and respond to the views of others. • Learners will have opportunities to listen to podcasts and recordings in order to develop their vocabulary and listening skills. • Use of oral history and interviews develop listening skills and the ability to respond to others appropriately. • Learners have the opportunity to share and respond to peer presentations.
Reading	<p>Learners will have the opportunity to read contemporary source material as well as a variety of historical interpretations, before critically evaluating the sources, analysing their content, and comparing and contrasting sources focusing on the interpretation they give on events.</p> <p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners can use a range of reading techniques such as skimming and scanning or reading for a purpose. • Reading extracts from a wide range of sources such as speeches, articles, diary extracts, historians and newspapers. • Comparing and contrasting the content of historical sources. • Assessing the reliability and accuracy of the text to develop the skill of critical reading.

	Learners will have the opportunity to develop their understanding of viewpoints and content through debate, discussion, presentations and group work.
Speaking	<p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Debating the most important reason why an event happened• Asking questions for clarification and development of understanding.• Learners can develop speaking skills through group and pair work.
	Learners will have the opportunity to use a range of subject-specific vocabulary, idiomatic language and be able to present their work digitally. They will also have opportunities to reflect on the structure and content of their writing.
Writing	<p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Role modelling of answers through teacher, peer and self-assessment activities.• Learners have the opportunity to use a wide range of writing styles such as formal, informal and first person.

Cross-curricular Skills – Numeracy

There are many opportunities to include Numeracy in GCSE History, for example analysing population change, interpreting statistics in primary and secondary sources, analysing graphs and timelines and engaging with concepts such as chronological awareness. These opportunities are important to learners because it allows them to contextualise events and quantify change. Learners can draw evidence-based conclusions based on statistics and numerical data.

Below are some examples of how Numeracy can be embedded into teaching and learning for GCSE History.

Learning about geometry helps us understand shape, space and position and learning about measurement helps us quantify in the real world	<p>Learners will have opportunities to analyse maps in order to understand the growth and development of empires or the geographical representation of wars.</p> <p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learners can analyse maps, structures and artifacts.• Learners can then analyse land division and urban planning.• There are opportunities to analyse military strategies and fortifications.
Learning that statistics represent data and that probability models chance help us make informed inferences and decisions	<p>Learners will have the opportunities to examine or interpret data and graphs through source analysis.</p> <p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learners can analyse data to draw conclusions on statistics such as population growth, costs and land expansion.• Secondary material such as graphs and charts can be interpreted.• There are opportunities for learners to create their own numerical representations of data gathered.

Cross-curricular Skills – Digital Competence

There are many opportunities to include Digital Competence in GCSE History. Learners can make use of digital technology to access a broad range of historical sources and to undertake research of a historical topic. Learners will also have the opportunity to develop their digital skills in preparing and completing their non-examination assessments. These opportunities will allow learners to develop cross-curricular skills which underpin the four purposes of the curriculum, as well as allowing further access to historical information while fostering current and future critical thinking and ethical awareness.

Below are some examples of how Digital Competence can be embedded into teaching and learning for GCSE History.

	Citizenship	Learners will develop an understanding of the importance of attributions, including the use of resources in digital formats such as e-books and online articles. Learners will be required to address attributions when analysing items for their historical enquiry and to think critically about the authors of digital evidence.
	Example	Learners should be made aware of copyright and plagiarism when looking at historical evidence and when developing and presenting their own arguments in relation to a topic.
	Interacting and Collaborating	Learners can work collaboratively (digitally) on tasks in preparation for the exam. These could include peer assessment, responding to teacher feedback or work creation.
	Example	In groups, learners could research and present a topic to introduce an area of study.
	Producing	Learners will have opportunities to research a variety of sources digitally and will develop digital skills when producing non-examinations assessments in a digital format.
	Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of national and international archives to find source materials that link to the area of study. • Complete the assessment using digital technology.

Integral Skills	
Creativity and Innovation	<p>There are many opportunities to include Creativity and Innovation in GCSE History. These opportunities are important to learners to become more engaged in lessons and enjoy learning through stimulating tasks. Deeper understanding is developed through the encouragement for learners to take an active role in their learning.</p> <p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learners will demonstrate creativity when developing responses, expressing their opinions about relevant historical issues and critically evaluating sources and evidence within assessments.• Learners have opportunities to be creative and innovative when presenting information and findings.
Critical Thinking and Problem Solving	<p>There are many opportunities to include Critical Thinking and Problem Solving in GCSE History. These opportunities are important to learners because they develop the ability to think analytically, and to collect, reflect and critically evaluate evidence in order to make informed judgements on a range of topics. This skill can be applied to real-life scenarios.</p> <p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learners will have opportunities to ask meaningful questions of source material and historical interpretations, as well as to evaluate them as part of their process of developing relevant critical arguments.• Learners will develop their ability to see issues from multiple viewpoints.• Studying continuity and change over time allows learners to develop their problem-solving skills that can be applied in their future lives.• Learners will evaluate sources and historical interpretations in terms of reliability, bias and purpose.• Critical thinking and problem solving encourages independent learning and promotes the ability to come to reasoned and informed decisions in other aspects of life such as further education or work.

Planning and Organisation	<p>There are many opportunities to include Planning and Organisation in GCSE History. These opportunities are important to Learners because these integral skills allow Learners to engage with the past, analyse information and communicate their findings which allow Learners to enhance their academic understanding and prepare them to apply historical knowledge in modern contexts.</p> <p>Below are some examples of how Planning and Organisation can be embedded into teaching and learning of GCSE History.</p> <p>Example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Learners will have opportunities to plan and then complete their response to an enquiry question.
Personal Effectiveness	<p>There are many opportunities to include Personal Effectiveness in GCSE History. These opportunities are important to learners because it develops resilience and the ability to work effectively. This helps to develop learners' time management skills and the ability to prioritise tasks, enhancing learners' ability to become adaptable individuals.</p> <p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Learning about potentially sensitive topics will allow learners to develop their emotional intelligence and historical awareness.Opportunities for peer, self and teacher assessment encourage learners to develop effective strategies to improve their work.Collaborating on a research task or presentation.Developing resilience through the revision and remodelling of answers.There are opportunities for learners to express their opinions about relevant historical issues, contemporary source materials and historical interpretations.

Glossary for Option 2.3

Early Modern: The Spanish Conquest of the Aztecs, c.1492 – c.1525

Term	Definition
Alliance	A relationship formed for mutual benefit.
Causeway	A raised road that crosses water.
Chinampa	A very fertile field that has been built in a waterway.
Conquistador	A Spanish conqueror of Mexico.
Encomienda	A grant to a colonist of the labour and production output of a group of Indigenous Peoples.
Indigenous Peoples	Someone who is originally from a particular place. Sometimes referred to as an aboriginal or native person.