

# **GCE Subject Level Guidance for Ancient History**

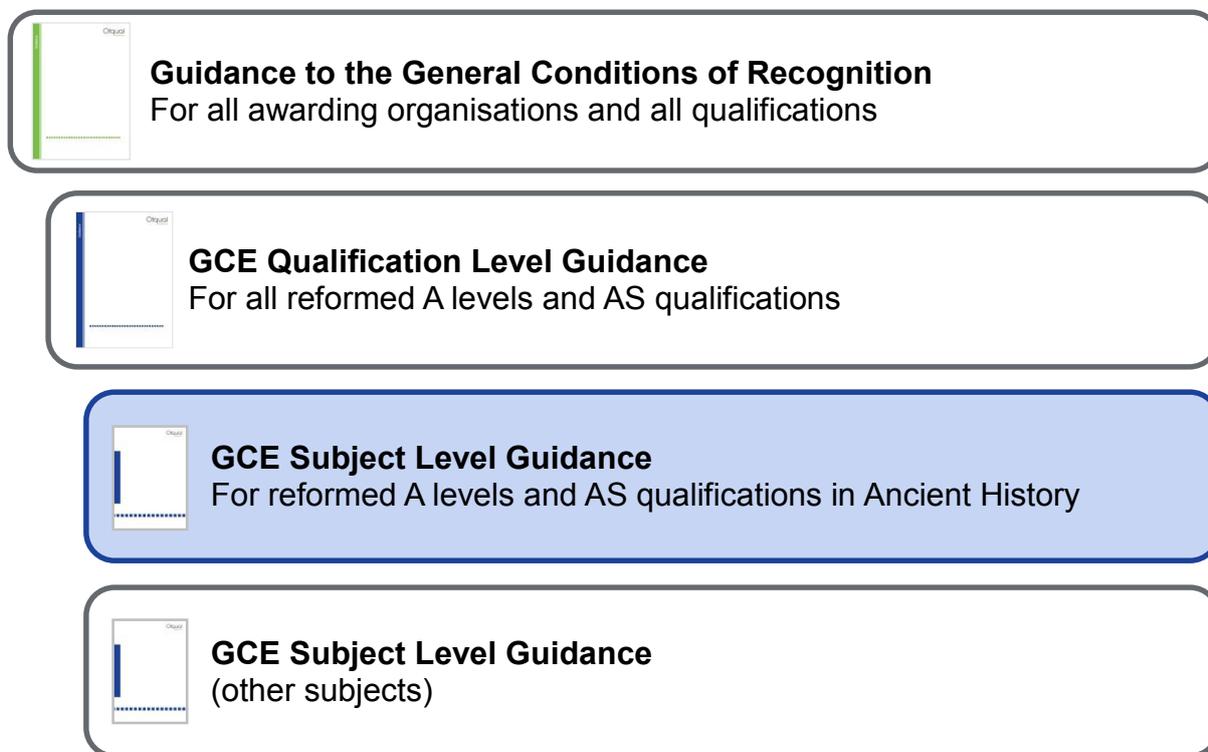
May 2016

# **Contents**

Introduction.....	2
Guidance set out in this document.....	3
Guidance on assessment objectives for GCE Qualifications in Ancient History .....	4

## Introduction

This document (highlighted in the figure below) is part of a suite of documents which outlines our guidance for awarding organisations offering GCE Qualifications.



This document sets out guidance which applies to the following qualifications:

- all GCE A levels in Ancient History awarded on or after 1 April 2019; and
- all standalone GCE AS qualifications in Ancient History awarded on or after 1 April 2018.

This guidance supports the *GCE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Ancient History*.<sup>1</sup>

This document constitutes guidance for the purposes of section 153 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 (the '2009 Act') and Condition GCE(Ancient History)1.

An awarding organisation has a legal obligation under the 2009 Act to have regard to this guidance, where relevant, in relation to each GCE Qualification in Ancient History

---

<sup>1</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-subject-level-conditions-and-requirements-for-ancient-history](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-subject-level-conditions-and-requirements-for-ancient-history)

that it makes available or proposes to make available. Condition GCE(Ancient History)1 imposes the same obligation in respect of the guidance below which is issued under that Condition.

An awarding organisation should use the guidance in this document to help it understand how to comply with the *GCE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Ancient History*.

## **Guidance set out in this document**

This document provides guidance in relation to subject content and on assessment objectives for GCE Qualifications in Ancient History.
--

## Guidance on assessment objectives for GCE Qualifications in Ancient History

Condition GCE(Ancient History)1.2 allows us to specify requirements and guidance relating to assessment objectives for GCE Qualifications in Ancient History.

We published our requirements in relation to assessment objectives in *GCE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Ancient History*, and reproduce them in the table below.

	Objective	Weighting (A level)	Weighting (AS)
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key features and characteristics of the historical periods studied.	20-30%	20-30%
AO2	Analyse and evaluate historical events and historical periods to arrive at substantiated judgements.	20-30%	20-30%
AO3	Use, analyse and evaluate ancient sources within their historical context to make judgements and draw conclusions about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ historical events and historical periods studied</li> <li>■ how the portrayal of events by ancient writers/sources relates to the historical contexts in which they were written/produced.</li> </ul>	35-45%	50-60%
AO4	Analyse and evaluate, in context, modern historians' interpretations of the historical events and topics studied.	15-20%	n/a

We set out below our guidance for the purposes of Condition GCE(Ancient History)1.2. This guidance explains how we expect awarding organisations to interpret these assessment objectives in terms of:

- the discrete 'elements' within each assessment objective that questions and tasks could target and/or seek to credit – our expectation is that each and every question/task should target or seek to credit at least one of these elements, and may target or seek to credit multiple elements across one or more assessment objectives;

- the coverage expectations, such as in relation to the different elements within each assessment objective and how those elements should be sampled over time; and
- the key areas of emphasis in each assessment objective and the particular meaning for the subject of any key terms and phrases used; defined terms are shown in bold text, followed by their definitions.

In line with the obligations set out in Condition GCE(Ancient History)1.2, we expect awarding organisations to be able to demonstrate how they have had regard to this guidance. For example, an awarding organisation could map how it has regard to the guidance as it:

- develops its sample assessment materials;
- delivers the qualification;
- develops and applies its approach to sampling the elements into which the assessment objectives are divided; and
- monitors the qualification to make sure it addresses all elements appropriately.

AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key features and characteristics of the historical periods studied.			20-30% (A level) 20-30% (AS)
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Interpretations and definitions
n/a	This assessment objective is a single element.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Full coverage in each set of assessments<sup>2</sup> (but not in every assessment).</li> <li>■ No more than 10% of the total marks for the qualification should reward demonstrating knowledge in isolation.<sup>3</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Key features and characteristics of the historical periods studied</b> are aspects of subject content set out in the document published by the Secretary of State entitled 'Ancient History AS and A level subject content<sup>4</sup>', reference DFE-00033-2016 (the 'Content Document'). Awarding organisations should explain their approach to targeting them in their assessment strategies.</li> </ul>

---

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this guidance, a 'set of assessments' means the assessments to be taken by a particular Learner for a GCE Qualification in Ancient History. For clarity, the assessments taken by Learners may vary, depending on any possible routes through the qualification.

<sup>3</sup> Marks which 'reward demonstrating knowledge in isolation' means any mark awarded solely for recalling facts or other knowledge that is part of the specification. It does not include marks awarded for selecting appropriate knowledge (for example, to evidence an argument), or for applying knowledge to a particular context.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-as-and-a-level-ancient-history>

AO2: Analyse and evaluate historical events and historical periods to arrive at substantiated judgements.		20-30% (A level) 20-30% (AS)	
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Interpretations and definitions
n/a	This assessment objective is a single element.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not in every assessment).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Both here and in AO3 and AO4:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>analyse</b> means deconstructing information and/or issues to find connections and provide logical chain(s) of reasoning, and</li> <li>□ <b>evaluate</b> means appraising and/or making judgements with respect to information and/or issues.</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Learners should be assessed on at least two of the key historical terms and historical concepts relevant to the context of the historical periods studied, as specified in paragraph 5, bullet 4 of the Content Document. Any question/task can target one or more of these.</li> <li>■ Awarding organisations should explain in their assessment strategies how they will achieve coverage of, and reasonable balance between, those key historical terms and historical concepts within each set of assessments and over time.</li> <li>■ This assessment objective should not be addressed in isolation. Questions/tasks should also target assessment objective(s) AO1 and/or AO3.</li> </ul>

AO3: Use, analyse and evaluate ancient sources within their historical context to make judgements and draw conclusions about:		35-45% (A level) 50-60% (AS)	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ historical events and historical periods studied</li> <li>▪ how the portrayal of events by ancient writers/sources relates to the historical contexts in which they were written/produced.</li> </ul>	
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Interpretations and definitions
n/a	1a – Use, analyse and evaluate ancient sources within their historical context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not in every assessment).</li> <li>▪ Elements 1b and 1c should be assessed alongside element 1a.</li> <li>▪ There should be a reasonable balance between elements 1b and 1c. Awarding Organisations should explain the rationale for weightings between the elements in their assessment strategies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ See guidance in relation to AO2 for definitions of <b>analyse</b> and <b>evaluate</b>.</li> <li>▪ <b>Ancient sources</b> means literary and material sources that in either their origin and/or their authorship are from the ancient world. This could include contemporary evidence that is collected and presented at a later date, for example, raw data.</li> <li>▪ <b>Historical contexts</b> include the social, political, religious and cultural circumstances that form the setting of a particular time, and in view of which a source or writing can be fully understood. Awarding Organisations should explain in their assessment strategies their approach to using sources which are likely to encompass a broad range of contexts over time.</li> <li>▪ Where the language of a source is translated and/or adapted, the meaning or point of view expressed by the author in the original source should not be altered.</li> <li>▪ A Learner's knowledge and understanding of the historical context may be credited as part of this assessment objective, but only where it is presented in a way which is relevant and intrinsically linked to the analysis/evaluation/use of the ancient source – it should not be credited in isolation.</li> </ul>
	1b - Make judgements and draw conclusions about historical events and historical periods studied.		
	1c - Make judgements and draw conclusions about how the portrayal of events by ancient writers / sources relates to the historical contexts in which they were written/produced.		

AO4: Analyse and evaluate, in context, modern historians' interpretations of the historical events and topics studied.			15-20% (A level) n/a (AS)
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Interpretations and definitions
n/a	This assessment objective is a single element.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not in every assessment).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ See guidance in relation to AO2 for definitions of <b>analyse</b> and <b>evaluate</b>.</li> <li>■ <b>In context</b> means both in the context of the historical debate, and in the context of the events and topics studied.</li> <li>■ In the context of this assessment objective, <b>modern historians</b> are academic historians writing from the start of the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards.</li> <li>■ An <b>interpretation</b> is an attempt to portray and/or make meaning of the past, including through evidence and/or reasoning; it is a construct created after the event(s). Interpretations at this level should be from academic historians.</li> <li>■ The interpretations to be analysed and evaluated may be presented in different ways, ranging from single attributed quotations to longer, multiple extracts.</li> <li>■ There are different ways in which interpretations can be evaluated and different approaches to this can be equally legitimate and appropriate. These different ways may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ the Learner's understanding of the wider historical debate connected to the issue,</li> <li>□ the methods or approach that have been used by an author,</li> <li>□ how an interpretation may have been affected by the time in which the author was writing.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ A Learner's knowledge and understanding of the historical context may be credited as part of this assessment objective, but only where it is presented in a way which is relevant and intrinsically linked to the analysis/evaluation/use of the interpretation – it should not be credited in isolation.</li><li>■ This assessment objective should not normally be assessed in isolation.</li><li>■ Where the language is translated and/or adapted, the meaning or point of view expressed by the author in the original source should not be altered.</li></ul>
--	--	--	---

We wish to make our publications widely accessible. Please contact us at [publications@ofqual.gov.uk](mailto:publications@ofqual.gov.uk) if you have any specific accessibility requirements.



© Crown copyright 2016

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit <http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3> or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [publications@ofqual.gov.uk](mailto:publications@ofqual.gov.uk).

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/ofqual](http://www.gov.uk/ofqual).

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at:

Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation

Spring Place  
Coventry Business Park  
Herald Avenue  
Coventry CV5 6UB

Telephone 0300 303 3344

Textphone 0300 303 3345

Helpline 0300 303 3346