

The internal assessment

All students complete a historical investigation into a historical topic of their choice. The topic need not be related to the syllabus and students should be encouraged to use their own initiative when deciding on a topic. The free choice of topic means that the historical investigation provides a particularly good opportunity for students to engage with topics that are of personal interest or topics related to their own local history.

Guidance and authenticity

As part of the learning process, teachers should read and give advice to students on one draft of the work. The teacher should provide oral or written advice on how the work could be improved, but should not edit the draft. The next version handed to the teacher must be the final version for submission.

Historical investigation

The historical investigation is made of up three sections:

- 1. Identification and evaluation of sources**
- 2. Investigation**
- 3. Reflection**

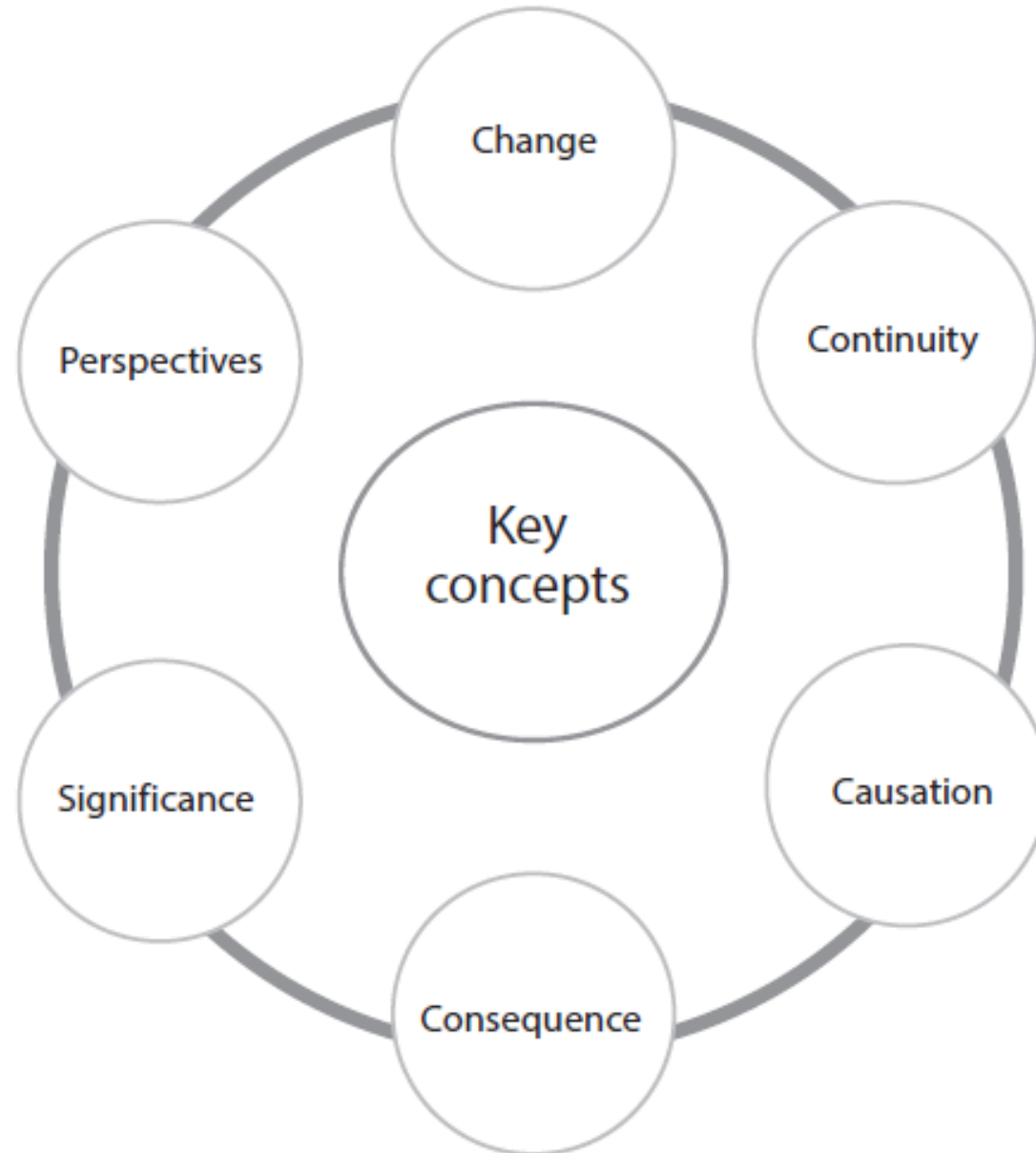
Section 1: Identification and evaluation of sources

This section requires students to analyse in detail two of the sources that they will use in their investigation. The sources can be either primary or secondary sources. In this section students must:

Section 1: Identification and evaluation of sources (cont.)

- clearly state the question they have chosen to investigate (this must be stated as a question)**
- include a brief explanation of the nature of the two sources they have selected for detailed analysis, including an explanation of their relevance to the investigation**
- analyse the two sources in detail. With reference to the origins, purpose and content, the student should analyse the value and limitations of the two sources in relation to the investigation.**

The six key concepts for the history course can be a very useful starting point in helping students to formulate a question:



The following are examples of historical investigations recently submitted by students:

- How significant were economic problems as a cause of the Bamberg Witch Trials (1623–1633)?**
- What were the most important reasons for the failure of Operation Market Garden?**
- To what extent was weak leadership responsible for the collapse of the Egyptian Old Kingdom in 2125 BC?**

Section 2: Investigation

The investigation must be clearly and effectively organized. It must contain critical analysis that is focused clearly on the question being investigated and must also include the conclusion that the student draws from their analysis.

In this section, students must use a range of evidence to support their argument. Please note that students can use primary sources, secondary sources, or a mixture of the two.

Section 3: Reflection

This section of the internal assessment task requires students to reflect on what undertaking their investigation highlighted to them about the methods used by, and the challenges facing, the historian. Examples of discussion questions that may help to encourage reflection include the following:

- **What methods used by historians did you use in your investigation?**
- **What did your investigation highlight to you about the limitations of those methods?**
- **What are the challenges facing the historian? How do they differ from the challenges facing a scientist or a mathematician?**
- **How can the reliability of sources be evaluated?**
- **What is the difference between bias and selection?**
- **What constitutes a historical event?**
- **Who decides which events are historically significant?**
- **Is it possible to describe historical events in an unbiased way?**
- **What is the role of the historian?**

Bibliography

A bibliography and clear referencing of all sources must be included with every investigation, but these are not included in the overall word count.

Word limit

The word limit for the historical investigation is 2,200 words.

Below are suggested word allocations for each section of the historical investigation. Please note that these word allocations are suggestions only.

- 1. Ident. and eval. of sources = approx. 500 words**
- 2. Investigation = approx. 1,300 words**
- 3. Reflection = approx. 400 words**

Criterion A: Identification and evaluation of sources (6 marks)

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–2	<p>The question for investigation has been stated. The student has identified and selected appropriate sources, but there is little or no explanation of the relevance of the sources to the investigation.</p> <p>The response describes, but does not analyse or evaluate, two of the sources.</p>
3–4	<p>An appropriate question for investigation has been stated. The student has identified and selected appropriate sources, and there is some explanation of the relevance of the sources to the investigation.</p> <p>There is some analysis and evaluation of two sources, but reference to their value and limitations is limited.</p>
5–6	<p>An appropriate question for investigation has been clearly stated. The student has identified and selected appropriate and relevant sources, and there is a clear explanation of the relevance of the sources to the investigation.</p> <p>There is a detailed analysis and evaluation of two sources with explicit discussion of the value and limitations of two of the sources for the investigation, with reference to the origins, purpose and content of the two sources.</p>

Criterion B: Investigation (15 marks)

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–3	<p>The investigation lacks clarity and coherence, and is poorly organized. Where there is a recognizable structure there is minimal focus on the task.</p> <p>The response contains little or no critical analysis. It may consist mostly of generalizations and poorly substantiated assertions. Reference is made to evidence from sources, but there is no analysis of that evidence.</p>
4–6	<p>There is an attempt to organize the investigation but this is only partially successful, and the investigation lacks clarity and coherence.</p> <p>The investigation contains some limited critical analysis but the response is primarily narrative/descriptive in nature, rather than analytical. Evidence from sources is included, but is not integrated into the analysis/argument.</p>
7–9	<p>The investigation is generally clear and well organized, but there is some repetition or lack of clarity in places.</p> <p>The response moves beyond description to include some analysis or critical commentary, but this is not sustained. There is an attempt to integrate evidence from sources with the analysis/argument.</p> <p>There may be awareness of different perspectives, but these perspectives are not evaluated.</p>

10–12	<p>The investigation is generally clear and well organized, although there may be some repetition or lack of clarity in places.</p> <p>The investigation contains critical analysis, although this analysis may lack development or clarity. Evidence from a range of sources is used to support the argument.</p> <p>There is awareness and some evaluation of different perspectives. The investigation argues to a reasoned conclusion.</p>
13–15	<p>The investigation is clear, coherent and effectively organized.</p> <p>The investigation contains well-developed critical analysis that is focused clearly on the stated question. Evidence from a range of sources is used effectively to support the argument.</p> <p>There is evaluation of different perspectives. The investigation argues to a reasoned conclusion that is consistent with the evidence and arguments provided.</p>

Criterion C: Reflection (4 marks)

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–2	<p>The reflection contains some discussion of what the investigation highlighted to the student about the methods used by the historian.</p> <p>The reflection demonstrates little awareness of the challenges facing the historian and/or the limitations of the methods used by the historian.</p> <p>The connection between the reflection and the rest of the investigation is implied, but is not explicit.</p>
3–4	<p>The reflection is clearly focused on what the investigation highlighted to the student about the methods used by the historian</p> <p>The reflection demonstrates clear awareness of challenges facing the historian and/or limitations of the methods used by the historian.</p> <p>There is a clear and explicit connection between the reflection and the rest of the investigation.</p>

Tentative Assignment Due Dates:

- Tues, 9/17: Topic question + preliminary source list (min. 5)**
- Tues, 10/15: Outline of investigation (inc. question, facts & what sources they're from, conclusion)**
- Tues, 11/12: Section 1: Identification and evaluation of sources**
- Tues, 12/10: Revised section 1 + Section 2: Investigation and Bibliography**
- Thurs, 1/23: Complete rough draft**
- Thurs, 2/20: Complete final draft**