



## Model history curriculum terms of reference

### The model history curriculum – principles and approach

The driving mission of this government since 2010 has been to raise education standards for all pupils, irrespective of background, ethnicity and where they live in the country. One of our priorities in 2010 was to reform the national curriculum. Our continued focus is to ensure that knowledge remains at the centre of the curriculum, and continue to raise expectations.

The Department is committed to supporting schools to deliver the high-quality teaching of a well-sequenced, knowledge-rich curriculum. As part of this, we want to develop detailed guidance on the teaching of relevant subjects in the statutory curriculum which builds on the existing national curriculum programmes of study to create 'model curricula' for implementation in schools.

The model curriculum approach will exemplify good practice regarding knowledge-rich teaching of a subject. It provides the foundation for subsequent development of curriculum resources and teacher professional development in these subjects.

Having already developed a model curriculum for music, we now wish to create a model curriculum for history at key stages 1 to 3. The model curriculum approach will promote a knowledge-rich teaching of history for ages 5 to 14, giving all pupils a shared knowledge of British and world history. It will also provide the foundation for subsequent development of curriculum resources and teacher professional development in these subjects.

The model history curriculum is a non-statutory guidance document to support the teaching of the national curriculum programmes of study for history and there are no plans to review the national curriculum itself.

The model history curriculum will therefore take the national curriculum as a starting point and ensure all pupils are taught a shared knowledge of British and world history, running from the prehistoric era and the earliest civilizations through to the modern area, including the two World Wars. It will cover the major contributions to civilization by all peoples, including those who have made Britain the nation it is today. It will set out key events, figures, major themes and wide-ranging landmarks of political, social, economic and cultural history. It will include how Britain has influenced, and been influenced by different societies and communities and it will also include recommended linked opportunities for the study of local history.

The model history curriculum will also represent the richness of world history, choosing societies and civilizations, and developments from beyond Europe, focusing on their historical development and significance in their own right.

More specifically, the model history curriculum will:

- be informed by up-to-date historical scholarship
- clearly specify the residual substantive knowledge that pupils will acquire over time, such as chronological frameworks, narratives embedding key events, descriptions of period features, accounts of change and diversity, substantive historical concepts and other common terms
- clearly specify the residual disciplinary knowledge that pupils will acquire over time, including the rigorous practice and appraisal of historical argument as set out in the aims of the national curriculum:
  - understand disciplinary concepts<sup>1</sup> such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance, and use them to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends, frame historically-valid questions and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives and analyses
  - understand the methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used rigorously to make historical claims, and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed
- be ambitious, rigorous, coherent and well-sequenced to ensure young people come to each succeeding topic with appropriate knowledge of other periods and themes
- set out a year-on-year programme of study from year 1 to year 9, following the national curriculum as the framework for a chronological approach to history and a clear sense of period
- build appropriately on the [early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework](#) and associated non-statutory guidance [Development Matters](#)
- provide the foundational historical knowledge for pupils to be prepared for further study in GCSE history or GCSE ancient history, as set out in the DfE subject

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<sup>1</sup> Substantive historical concepts (sometimes called first-order concepts) are concepts such as 'empire', 'democracy', 'peasant farmer', 'humanism' or 'autocracy', namely abstract concepts which enable pupils to generalise about substantive phenomena which recur in multiple settings and/or across time. Disciplinary concepts (sometimes called second-order concepts) are those rooted in the practice of history as an academic subject. They frame the types of questions historians ask and the types of account that such questions typically command. For example, continuity, change, cause, consequence, significance and similarity and difference within situations.

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- ensure that all pupils, including pupils who do not pursue further study of history as a discipline after key stage 3, have sufficient, enduring reference points in the past and sufficient disciplinary awareness to be able to continue to interpret the world historically (such as interpreting the historic environment in the local area or other legacies of the past), to join discussion and debate using informed reference to the past, to comprehend and appraise texts or other media conveying accounts of the past and to conduct their own enquiries for pleasure
- foster shared knowledge of British and world history, running from the prehistoric era and the earliest civilizations through to the modern era, including the two World Wars
- cover the major contributions to civilization by all peoples, including influences which have shaped Britain today so that pupils understand British history within broader temporal, geographical and cultural contexts
- encompass wide-ranging accounts of political, social, economic and cultural history including key themes, landmark events, states of affairs and the changing experiences and contributions of diverse people
- represent the richness, breadth and interconnectedness of world history, including a focus on the experiences and significance of diverse groups, societies and civilisations in their own right
- equip teachers to ensure pupils:
  - understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance, and use them to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends, frame historically-valid questions and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives and analyses
  - understand the methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used rigorously to make historical claims, and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed

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<sup>2</sup> The DfE subject content for [GCSE history](#) and GCSE [ancient history](#) sets out the learning outcomes and content coverage required for GCSE specifications in these subjects.

## Expert panel

The model history curriculum will be written by a nominated lead drafter, with advice and guidance from an expert panel.

The panel will comprise an appropriate range of expertise in history, history teaching and curriculum design. The panel will be credible with schools, teachers and in terms of history teaching. The panel will support a knowledge-rich approach to the curriculum, which clearly sets out the specific historical factual content pupils are expected to acquire and retain during their education, and how that content builds through that education.

All Panel members agree to the outlined intentions of the programme, and the principles that will guide the development of the model history curriculum.

## Membership

The Department will have the final decision on appointments to the expert panel. Appointments will be expected to commit to attend and contribute to all meetings of the group where possible.

The expert panel will be chaired by Michael Kandiah (Lecturer in Contemporary British History & Director of Oral History Project, King's College London).

The expert panel members will be:

- John Blake (Director for Fair Access and Participation, Office for Students)
- Dr Katharine Burn (Associate Professor of Education and PGCE Course Director, University of Oxford)
- Blondel Cluff CBE (Windrush Cross-Government Working Group)
- Christine Counsell – Lead Drafter (Independent education consultant; Editor, Teaching History; Trustee, David Ross Education Trust; Trustee, Now Teach)
- Hannah Cusworth (PhD researcher and Educational consultant specialising in history)
- Ailsa Fidler (Senior Lecturer in Primary Education specialising in History, Liverpool John Moores University)
- Rachel Foster (Senior Teaching Associate and Secondary History PGCE subject lecturer, University of Cambridge, Faculty of Education)
- Professor Toby Green (Professor of Precolonial and Lusophone African History and Culture, King's College London)
- Michael Hill (History Teacher & Senior Tutor, Ark Academy)
- Dr Michael Kandiah – Chair of the Panel (Lecturer in Contemporary British History & Director of Oral History Project, King's College London)

- Nicolas Kinloch (Former University of Cambridge, Institute of Continuing Education History tutor and mentor)
- Dr Michael Maddison (Educational consultant, specialising in history)
- Steve Mastin (Educational consultant, specialising in history)
- Sir Martyn Oliver (Chief Executive Officer of Outwood Grange Academies Trust)
- Sir Hamid Patel CBE (Chief Executive, Star Academies)
- Andrew Percival (Deputy Head, Stanley Road Primary School)
- Rebecca Sullivan (Chief Executive Officer, Historical Association)
- Professor Robert Tombs (Professor Emeritus of French History, University of Cambridge)
- Tim Jenner – Observer (Ofsted subject lead for history)

All expert panel members will operate on an unpaid basis. All expert panel members will be expected to conform to the standards of conduct and to abide by the conflicts of interest policy. All panel members are expected to adhere to these terms of reference.

Reasonable travel expenses will be provided to panel members for the attendance of any face-to-face meetings.

## Scope and remit of the group

The expert panel will:

- comment on each iteration of the draft of the model history curriculum, providing advice and guidance on the aims, structure and content
- comment on options for a sustainable approach to the implementation of the new model curriculum in schools, taking account of relevant best practice, lessons learnt and innovation from the wider sector
- support the launch and promotion of the model history curriculum as appropriate, including using their own networks

The Department will retain ultimate responsibility for decisions on scope and content of the new model history curriculum.

## Meetings and methods of working

The expert panel will comprise leading history teachers and history experts. The panel chair may also extend invitations to expert witnesses to draw on specialist expertise, as required. Expert panel members will be able to recommend additional experts that they wish the Chair to invite to meetings or to submit evidence.

The expert panel will consider evidence and practice from the UK and internationally. Analytical support, if appropriate, will be provided by the Department.

It is expected that the expert panel will be in place in this form until the model history curriculum is launched.

Meetings will be held as needed and may include remote and virtual participation, at the discretion of the chair. There will be a minimum of three meetings over the development period of the model history curriculum.

All correspondence for meetings will be sent via email. The Department will provide the secretariat to the group. The secretariat will make the necessary arrangements for each meeting, including providing relevant supporting papers. The secretariat will take notes of meetings and circulate to group members in a timely fashion.

Expert panel members will be expected to attend agreed meetings and contribute to interim updates as and when required, though the Department recognises there may be pressures on availability due to unforeseen circumstances. The chair will be responsible for leading the meeting discussion and assigning actions. The chair will have the casting vote, should the panel be unable to reach a consensus or where it may be necessary to refocus the panel on specific aims.

The expert panel will not produce a binding set of recommendations, as the panel will operate in an advisory capacity only. The chair will be responsible for updating ministers on progress.

## **Public Sector Equality Duty**

The panel will be expected to approach work on the model history curriculum in a way that meets the principles of the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#), where appropriate, thus having due regard to the need to achieve the objectives set out under s149 of the Equality Act 2010 to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it