

CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL AS & A LEVEL

History 9489

Assessment Overview

Examinations 2027, 2028 and 2029

How the qualification is assessed

The table shows the papers and components described for this syllabus. AS candidates take the designated AS components; the full A Level includes the additional components shown. A component's raw mark is the total available on that assessment; its weighting is the share of the qualification result, which may differ from its share of raw marks.

Paper or component	Duration	Raw marks	Weighting	Question or task structure
1: Historical Sources	1 h 15 min	40	AS 40%; A 20%	One two-part source question
2: Outline Study	1 h 45 min	60	AS 60%; A 30%	Two two-part questions on other topics in the selected option
3: Historical Interpretations	1 h 15 min	40	A 20%	Analyse a historian's extract on the selected topic
4: Depth Study	1 h 45 min	60	A 30%	Two of three essays within the chosen regional option

Read the weighting against your qualification route. A longer paper or a larger raw-mark total does not automatically mean a greater final weighting. Prepare for every component that applies to you, including practical, oral or coursework requirements where specified.

What each component requires

AS Level candidates take Papers 1 and 2.

Paper 1, Historical Sources, lasts seventy-five minutes and is worth forty marks. You answer one two-part source question on the prescribed topic for your regional option. The topic changes according to Cambridge's annual rotation. This paper contributes forty per cent of AS Level and twenty per cent of A Level.

Paper 2, Outline Study, lasts one hour and forty-five minutes and is worth sixty marks. You answer two two-part questions on the other two topics within your selected option. The first part of each question requires historical explanation; the second requires analysis and a supported judgement. This paper contributes sixty per cent of AS Level and thirty per cent of A Level.

Full A Level candidates also take Papers 3 and 4.

Paper 3, Historical Interpretations, lasts seventy-five minutes and is worth forty marks. You analyse an anonymous extract of up to six hundred words from a historian's writing, using your own knowledge to explain the historian's interpretation and approach. It contributes twenty per cent of A Level.

Paper 4, Depth Study, lasts one hour and forty-five minutes and is worth sixty marks. You answer two thirty-mark essays from a choice of three within your selected regional option. It contributes thirty per cent of A Level.

AS Level may be taken independently, carried forward through the staged route, or completed with Papers 3 and 4 in one linear A Level series.

AS Level is graded from lower-case a to e, while the full A Level is graded from A star to E.

Preparing the right kind of response

Answer the historical issue in the question rather than narrating everything you know. Source evaluation needs provenance, content and contextual knowledge used together. An essay should weigh relevant factors or interpretations and support its judgement with selected evidence.

The assessment objectives are visible in the response itself: relevant knowledge, appropriate use of the stimulus or task, a clear method or explanation, and a conclusion where requested. The command word and mark allocation help show the depth required. An answer should respond to the actual question, not reproduce a memorised passage that only partly fits.

Timing and examination arrangements

Begin preparation with accurate, untimed work, then move towards the duration and conditions of your required component. Use mark allocations to guide pacing while allowing time to read instructions and check the response. Any practice pacing advice is study guidance, not a new Cambridge time rule.

Examinations are available in June and November. However, this syllabus is not offered in every administrative zone and is unavailable in the United States from 2027, so availability must be confirmed before registration. Private candidates may enter.

An approved examination centre confirms entries, available component options, deadlines and any practical or speaking arrangements. Preparation-course access does not itself constitute an examination entry. Choose one AS regional option and its prescribed topics, then one Paper 3 interpretations topic and one Paper 4 depth-study option for A Level. The subject is not available in every administrative zone and is unavailable in the United States from 2027; confirm eligibility for the intended centre and series.

Key pointers: Know your required components, follow question choices precisely and practise the relevant response formats. **Next:** Open **Learning Resources** to see which materials support this preparation.