2 Rationale

The study of history is an inquiry into past experience that helps make the present more intelligible. A study of the past is invaluable, for to be unaware of history is to be ignorant of those forces that have shaped our social and physical worlds. Through the study of ancient history, students learn both about the interaction of societies and the impact of individuals and groups on ancient events and ways of life. The study of ancient history gives students an understanding of the possibilities and limitations of comparing past to present and present to past by exposing them to a variety of perspectives on key events and issues. It also gives them opportunities to develop their own perspectives on the origins and influence of ideas, values and behaviours that are still relevant in the modern world.

Ancient History Stage 6 has a unique role in the school curriculum because it allows students to study and analyse past societies with a detachment conferred by the perspectives of at least two millennia. It draws on a variety of disciplines and sources, both written and archaeological, such as literary works, coins, inscriptions, art, architecture, artefacts and human remains, enabling students to piece together an informed and coherent view of the past. Because the amount of surviving evidence is relatively small, students are able to consider it in its entirety and thus weigh their own interpretations alongside those found in published secondary works, while noting how to deal with gaps in the evidence. In addition, it introduces students to scientific methods used in the historian’s investigation of archaeological evidence.

Students study ancient history because it provides them with opportunities to satisfy their fascination and interest in the stories of the past and the mysteries of human behaviour. It allows them to develop and apply the research skills and methodologies of the historian and archaeologist. It equips students to question critically and interpret written and archaeological sources for the evidence they provide about the ancient world.

Through the study of ancient history, students develop knowledge and understanding of the similarities and differences between the various societies of the ancient past and the factors affecting change and continuity in human affairs.

A study of ancient history contributes to students’ education, introducing them to a wide range of religious beliefs and customs, ideologies and other cultures. This broad knowledge encourages them to develop an appreciation and understanding of different views and makes them aware of how these views contribute to individual and group actions.

The study of ancient history raises significant contemporary ethical issues associated with present and future ownership, administration and presentation of the cultural past. It empowers students with knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes that are useful for their lifelong learning.

The skills, knowledge and understanding that students acquire through studying Ancient History Stage 6 make it a good introduction to the world of work and informed citizenship. This is because Ancient History Stage 6 teaches a critical and intelligent reading of events and documents, as well as the effective and fluent communication of narrative, detail, ideas and judgements.
Stage 4 History (Mandatory) students are required to undertake an introductory unit *Investigating History* which explores the purpose and nature of history and the process used by historians to investigate and record the past. It also examines issues of heritage and conservation in relation to a study of the past. In Stage 4, all students are required to study at least one ancient society.

Stage 5 History (Mandatory) focuses on twentieth-century Australian history. Students continue to develop the skills of historical inquiry through this study. An understanding of the Stages 4–5 (Mandatory) material is assumed knowledge for Ancient History students in Stage 6.
4  **Aim**

The study of Ancient History enables students to acquire knowledge and understanding, historical skills, and values and attitudes essential to an appreciation of the ancient world; to develop a lifelong interest and enthusiasm for ancient history; and to prepare for informed and active citizenship in the contemporary world.

5  **Objectives**

Through the study of Ancient History Stage 6 students will develop:

**knowledge and understanding about:**
1  people, places, societies and events in the context of their times
2  change and continuity over time

**skills to:**
3  undertake the process of historical inquiry
4  communicate an understanding of history

**values and attitudes about:**
5  the diversity and complexity of ancient societies
6  the influence of the ancient past on the present and the future
7  the value of Ancient History for personal growth and lifelong learning
8  the conservation of the past.

6  **Course Requirements**

For the Preliminary course:
- 120 indicative hours are required to complete the course

For the HSC course:
- the Preliminary course is a prerequisite
- 120 indicative hours are required to complete the course.
7 Course Structure

Preliminary Course (120 indicative hours)

The Preliminary course is structured to provide students with opportunities to investigate past people, groups, events, institutions, societies and historical sites from the sources available, by applying the methods used by historians and archaeologists.

Students are required to study Parts I, II and III of the course.

Part I: Introduction
(a) Investigating the Past: History, Archaeology and Science
(b) Case Studies

At least ONE case study should be undertaken.
A range of possible case studies is provided in Section 9, page 19.

Part II: Studies of Ancient Societies, Sites and Sources
At least ONE study of ancient societies, sites and sources should be undertaken.
A range of possible studies is provided in Section 9, page 23.

Part III: Historical Investigation
The investigation can be integrated into any aspect of the Preliminary course and need not be completed as one project. It may be conducted individually or as part of a group. The investigation must not overlap or duplicate significantly any topic attempted for the HSC Ancient History or History Extension courses.

Further detail on the investigation is provided on page 30.

Choices of studies in Parts I, II and III, other than those offered here, must be chosen from different civilisations.

HSC Course (120 indicative hours)

The course comprises a study of:

Part I: Core: Cities of Vesuvius – Pompeii and Herculaneum 25% of course time
Part II: ONE Ancient Society 25% of course time
Part III: ONE Personality in Their Time 25% of course time
Part IV: ONE Historical Period 25% of course time

The course requires study from at least TWO of the following areas:
1 Egypt
2 Near East
3 Greece
4 Rome

The core study, Cities of Vesuvius – Pompeii and Herculaneum, is a Roman study.
## Preliminary Course (120 indicative hours)

### Part I: Introduction
(a) Investigating the Past: History, Archaeology and Science:
(b) Case Studies

At least ONE case study should be undertaken. A range of possible case studies is provided in Section 9, page 19.

### Part II: Ancient Societies, Sites and Sources

At least ONE study of ancient societies, sites and sources should be undertaken. A range of possible studies is provided in Section 9, page 23.

### Part III: Historical Investigation

The historical investigation can be integrated into any aspect of the Preliminary course. The investigation must not overlap or duplicate significantly any topic attempted for the HSC Ancient History or History Extension courses.

## HSC Course (120 indicative hours)

### Part I: Core: Cities of Vesuvius – Pompeii and Herculaneum 25%

### Part II: Ancient Societies 25%
One ancient society is to be studied.

### Part III: Personalities in Their Times 25%
One personality is to be studied.

### Part IV: Historical Periods 25%
One historical period is to be studied.

The HSC course requires study from at least TWO of the following areas:
- Egypt
- Near East
- Greece
- Rome

Note: The core study, *Cities of Vesuvius: Pompeii and Herculaneum*, is a Roman study.
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