



Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board



**CAMBRIDGE**  
International Education

**Singapore–Cambridge General Certificate of Education  
Ordinary Level (2026)**

# **History (Syllabus 2174)**

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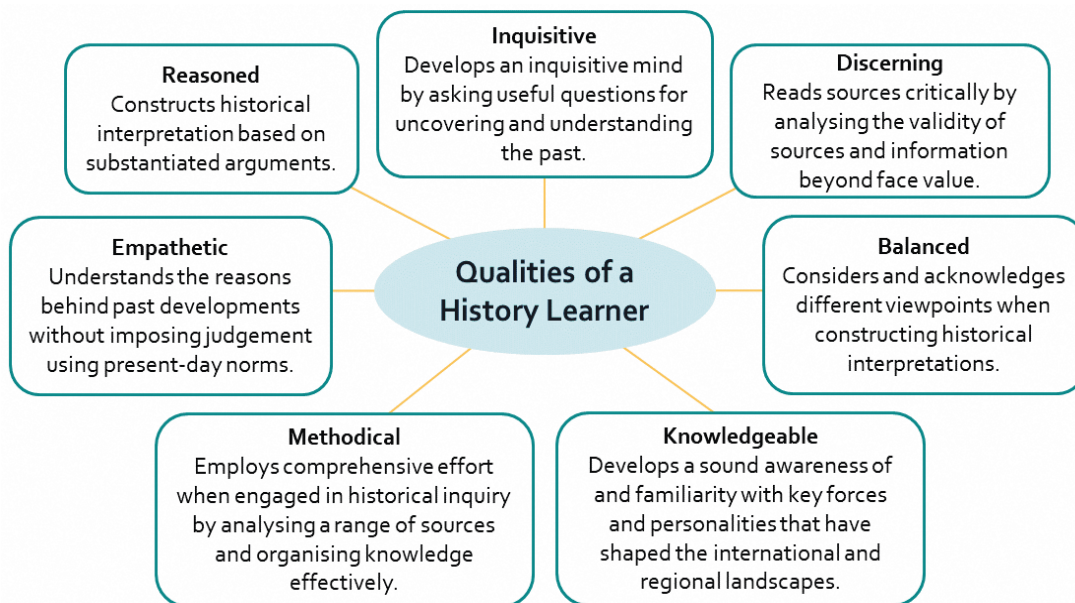
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## INTRODUCTION

History education in Singapore seeks to develop in students an appreciation of past human experiences, critical awareness of the nature of historical knowledge, and the ability to make connections between the past and present. In a world where attention is often divided between concerns over the present and the future, the relevance of History is often questioned. Learning to manage the present and anticipate the future would not be possible without knowing the past.

History prepares students to thrive as citizens in a complex and fast-changing world by equipping them with the knowledge and skills to understand how forces, events and developments of the past shaped today's world. It also develops in students a disciplined and critical mind to discern and make informed judgements based on consideration of multiple perspectives, reasoned and well-substantiated conclusions. History also helps students to participate actively in a globalised world, as they learn to make sense of ambiguous and complex global developments, appreciate local contexts and engage with different cultures and societies sensitively. These are encapsulated in the seven qualities of a history learner which the History curriculum aims to develop:



**Figure 1. Qualities of a History learner**

## AIMS

The Upper Secondary History syllabus reflects the value placed on the study of history by seeking to:

- engage students actively in historical inquiry so as to develop them into confident, self-directed, critical and reflective thinkers
- enable students to acquire knowledge and understanding of how the past has been interpreted, represented and accorded significance for different reasons and purposes
- develop an inquisitive mind in students with the ability to ask relevant questions about the past and examine a range of sources critically in their historical context to reach substantiated judgements about the past
- develop in students the ability to organise and communicate their historical knowledge and understanding through a variety of ways using different media
- equip them with the necessary historical knowledge, understanding, dispositions and skills to understand the present and contribute actively and responsibly as local and global citizens
- inspire them to further study and pursue their personal interest in the past.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

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### Knowledge and Understanding

At the end of the course, students should be able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of:

- History as a construct – History is constructed from evidence and there are different interpretations of historical events
- the key characteristics of the periods studied – this includes the social, economic, cultural and political contexts of the societies studied and the experiences of the peoples who lived in these societies at that point in time
- the interconnections between individuals, societies, events and developments studied and those in the present day
- key individuals, groups, forces, events and ideas that shaped the development of the political, social and cultural contexts of our world today
- the process of change by showing change and/or development within and across the periods of study.

### Skills

Students should be able to employ the following skills to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding:

- establishing historical patterns and relevance to the present
- comparing different aspects of the periods, events and issues studied to establish change and continuity
- analysing and evaluating causation (cause and effect) of historical events and situations whilst avoiding abstract generalisations
- assessing and establishing the significance of individuals, ideas, events, forces and developments on societies
- identifying points of view in History through distinguishing bias, fact and opinion in history writing
- analysing, evaluating and synthesising historical information from a variety of media to make informed conclusions
- organising and communicating historical knowledge and understanding in a coherent way.

### Values and Attitudes

Students should also be able to demonstrate the core values and mindsets associated with history learning when they:

- show sensitivity to how people's values and beliefs shape their interpretations of events, issues or developments in any specific time and space
- are aware of how cultural, intellectual and emotional contexts shape the thinking, value systems, decisions and actions of different peoples and groups in different times and places
- show openness to and respect for diverse, and sometimes opposing viewpoints
- empathise with people from different social, cultural, economic and political backgrounds
- modify and adapt their thinking and actions according to multiple sources of information, perspectives and different circumstances, guided by core values
- are able to handle ambiguity and pose relevant questions to conduct further investigation independently
- identify and embrace connections between themselves and the larger community (past and present) and realise that their actions impact others, thus promoting a commitment to improving the community and country
- make judgements on historical events and determine the ways in which they can respond to these events guided by the core values.

## ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

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Candidates should be able to:

### Objective 1: Deploy Knowledge

- select, organise and use relevant historical knowledge in context.

### Objective 2: Construct Explanation and Communicate Historical Knowledge

- analyse and explain historical events and periods studied using key historical concepts (causation and consequence, change and continuity, significance) in order to arrive at a reasoned conclusion.

### Objective 3: Interpret and Evaluate Source Materials

- interpret, evaluate and use a range of sources as evidence in their historical context through:
  - comprehending and extracting relevant information
  - drawing inferences from given information
  - comparing and contrasting different views;
  - distinguishing between facts, opinion and judgement
  - recognising values and detecting bias
  - establishing utility of given information
  - drawing conclusions based on a reasoned consideration of evidence and arguments.

## SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT

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### Assessment Specification Grid

Assessment Objectives	Paper 1 (weighting)	Paper 2 (weighting)
AO1 + AO2	20%	20%
AO1 + AO3	30%	30%
Total	50%	50%

**Note:** AO1 forms part of the testing of AO2 and AO3.

## Assessment Format

The examination consists of **two** papers – Paper 1 and Paper 2, taken at separate sittings. The duration of each paper is **1 hour 50 minutes**. Each paper is assessed by a source-based case study and essay questions.

Candidates will receive the question papers in hard copy. A digital answer booklet will be provided with each question paper. Candidates are required to type their responses in the digital answer booklet.

<b>Paper 1: Extension of European control in Southeast Asia and challenges to European dominance, 1870s–1942</b>	
<b>Section A: Source-Based Case Study (30%)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maximum of 6 sources</li> <li>Q1(a)–(e): source-based questions (AO1 + AO3)</li> </ul>	30m
<b>Section B: Essay Questions (20%)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Answer 2 out of 3 questions set (AO1 + AO2)</li> <li>The questions require candidates to analyse, evaluate and make judgement on historical events and/or issues</li> <li>Each question carries 10 marks</li> </ul>	20m
<b>Total marks for Paper 1</b>	<b>50m</b>

<b>Paper 2: Developments in the post-World War II world: The Cold War and decolonisation in Southeast Asia, 1940s–1991</b>	
<b>Section A: Source-Based Case Study (30%)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maximum of 6 sources</li> <li>Q1(a)–(e): source-based questions (AO1 + AO3)</li> </ul>	30m
<b>Section B: Essay Questions (20%)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Answer 2 out of 3 questions set (AO1 + AO2)</li> <li>The questions require candidates to analyse, evaluate and make judgement on historical events and/or issues</li> <li>Each question carries 10 marks</li> </ul>	20m
<b>Total marks for Paper 2</b>	<b>50m</b>

### Section A: Source-Based Case Study

Candidates are required to answer the compulsory source-based case study. The topics for the source-based case study are prescribed and indicated by the symbol (\*) in the syllabus content. Candidates are expected to have a sound knowledge of the prescribed units and an understanding of the ways in which sources may be evaluated.

A maximum of **six** sources may be set for the source-based case study. No individual source will exceed **150 words**. One or more differing accounts of the same topic or issue might be set, showing different views as time progresses or in communicating to different audiences. Sources may be simplified where necessary.

Each source-based case study will have five sub-questions, testing Objectives 1 and 3. The first four sub-questions will test specific sources. The fifth sub-question will require candidates to use the evidence in multiple sources to demonstrate the skills of analysis, explanation and judgement for an issue related to the topic assessed in the source-based case study. The weighting for each sub-question will be indicated in brackets. A 'Levels of Response Mark Scheme' (LORMs) will be used to assess candidates' answers.

## Section B: Essay Questions

Candidates are required to answer 2 out of 3 questions set. The questions will test Objectives 1 and 2 and require candidates to analyse, evaluate and make judgement on events and/or issues. Each question is worth a total of 10 marks. The questions will be marked using the 'Levels of Response Mark Scheme' (LORMs).

Questions will be set on any issue/topic within the units in the syllabus except for the issue assessed in the source-based case study in Section A in the same year of examination. Questions set on Dutch Indonesia and French Vietnam for both Paper 1 and Paper 2 will require candidates to support their answers with examples from one country of study. In addition, questions set on the Dutch Indonesia and French Vietnam will be in the form of an 'either/or' option.

## SYLLABUS CONTENT

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The revised syllabus seeks to develop in students an understanding of how the present world system came into being and the interconnectedness of nation states and peoples. This understanding is important for our students to function as effective citizens and participants in the 21st century. The syllabus is framed by a metanarrative to help students to acquire an understanding of the key forces and events that shaped the history of the late 19th to 20th century. Students will examine the changing context of world politics and the different responses of individuals and groups to these developments at the local, regional and global levels. They will evaluate the consequences and impact of the decisions and actions taken by individuals and states. Through studying the key developments of colonisation, rise of authoritarian regimes, World War II, the Cold War and decolonisation, students will be better equipped to comprehend and explain contemporary developments in the region and the world today.

### Paper 1 – Extension of European control in Southeast Asia and challenges to European dominance, 1870s–1942

Overview of Southeast Asia before 1870 [*Non-examinable*]

Extension of European control in Southeast Asia

- British Malaya, 1870s–1920s (Compulsory)\*
- Dutch Indonesia, 1870s–1920s OR
- French Vietnam, 1870s–1920s

After World War I

- Overview of World War I [*Non-examinable*]
- Aims and terms of the Paris Peace Conference and its immediate impact on Europe in the 1920s

Rise of Authoritarian Regimes

- Overview of the attempts at establishing viable political systems after World War I [*Non-examinable*]
- Case Study of Nazi Germany\*
- Case Study of Militarist Japan, 1920s–1930s

War in Europe and the Asia-Pacific

- Key developments leading to the outbreak of World War II in Europe\*
- Key developments leading to the outbreak of World War II in the Asia-Pacific

### Paper 2 – Developments in the post-World War II world: The Cold War and decolonisation in Southeast Asia, 1940s–1991

War in Europe and the Asia-Pacific

- Reasons for the end of World War II

*Note: Teachers should note that, although detailed study of the military campaigns of World War II is not required, students will need to be aware of the major turning points of the war leading to the defeat of Germany and Japan.*

The Cold War

- Origins and development of the Cold War in Europe\*
- Extension of the Cold War outside Europe: Case study of Korean War, 1950–1953\* and Vietnam War, 1954 – 1975

*Note: Teachers should note that, although detailed studies of the military campaigns of the Korean War and Vietnam War are not required, students will need to be aware of the major turning points of the wars.*

Decolonisation and establishment of newly independent nations in Southeast Asia

- British Malaya, 1945–1957 (Compulsory)\*
- Dutch Indonesia, 1945–1949 OR
- French Vietnam, 1945–1954

End of the Cold War

- Overview of different phases of thawing and rising tensions between the USA and the USSR in the 1960s and 1970s [*Non-examinable*]
- Decline of the USSR and the end of Cold War

**Source-based case studies will only be set on the topics indicated by the symbol [\*].**



## AMPLIFICATION OF SYLLABUS DETAILS

### Paper 1: Extension of European control in Southeast Asia and challenges to European dominance, 1870s–1942

#### Focus

This paper focuses on the key events and forces that shaped the world order from 1870s to the outbreak of World War II. It examines how the extension of colonial rule in Southeast Asia shaped the development of different Southeast Asian states like Malaya, Indonesia and Vietnam. Students will also examine the interactions between the locals and colonial powers, in particular, how the locals responded, challenged and managed the extension of European control in Southeast Asia. The paper also examines the key forces and developments that shaped the post-World War I world, including the attempts at collective security, the rise of authoritarian regimes in Nazi Germany and Militarist Japan, and the developments that led to the outbreak of World War II in Europe and the Asia-Pacific.

#### Making Connections

An understanding of European colonisation in Southeast Asia will help students to make sense of the colonial imprints they see in the society and the region they live in today, and appreciate the ingenuity and resilience of the people in the region. The study of the impact of World War I and II, League of Nations and the rise of authoritarian regimes will also allow students to recognise that the interests and ambitions of individuals and nations can have significant consequences on societies and the world and recognise the need for and importance of international cooperation and collective security to prevent future conflicts.

Key Knowledge	Learning Outcomes (Knowledge and Skills)	Key Concepts
<p><b>Overview of Southeast Asia before 1870 [Non-examinable]</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Island and mainland Southeast Asia: Geography, people, political systems and the role of external influence on the region               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Political systems in Southeast Asia before the arrival of the Europeans, including the traditional idea of territorial boundaries</li> <li>– Economy, culture and religion of Southeast Asia before the arrival of the Europeans</li> </ul> </li> <li>• European interest in Southeast Asia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the geography, people, political systems of pre-1870 Southeast Asia, and the role of external influences on the region.</li> <li>• Examine the motivations behind European interest in Southeast Asia.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Imperialism</li> <li>• Colonialism</li> </ul>

Key Knowledge	Learning Outcomes (Knowledge and Skills)	Key Concepts
<p><b>Extension of European Control in Southeast Asia</b> British Malaya, 1870s–1920s (Compulsory)*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extension of British control in Malaya <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– British presence in Malaya before 1870 [<i>Non-examinable</i>] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ British trading interests in Southeast Asia</li> <li>○ Significance of the 1824 Anglo-Dutch Treaty on British presence in Malaya</li> <li>○ Pre-1870 administration of Malaya: Administration of the Straits Settlements, role of local elites, policy of non-intervention in the Malay states</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Shift in British policy towards Malaya in 1870s: Case study of Perak <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Circumstances that led to British intervention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increased desire to build empires and spheres of influence</li> <li>▪ Need for raw materials and cash crops</li> <li>▪ Internal instability due to Larut Wars and succession disputes</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Role of key players in British intervention</li> <li>○ Immediate outcome of British intervention</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Transformation of Malaya after British intervention in 1874 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Political: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increased British control over the government and administration of Malaya <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Introduction of British Residential System with emphasis on Perak</li> <li>▪ Establishment of the Federated Malay States (1895) and Unfederated Malay States (1909)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>– Economic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Growth and development of cash crop (rubber) and mineral industries (tin) and the creation of export-oriented economy</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Social: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Growth of plural society and townships</li> <li>○ Emergence of Western-educated elites</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Local responses to political, social and economic changes under British rule</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess the circumstances that led to the extension of European influence in Southeast Asia.</li> <li>• Assess the roles of individuals and groups in the extension of European influence.</li> <li>• Evaluate the impact of European influence on Southeast Asia after 1870.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intervention</li> <li>• Direct rule</li> <li>• Indirect rule</li> <li>• Exploitation</li> <li>• Extractive economy</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Resistance</li> </ul>

Key Knowledge	Learning Outcomes (Knowledge and Skills)	Key Concepts
<p><b>EITHER</b> Dutch Indonesia, 1870s–1920s</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extension of Dutch control in Indonesia from Java to the Outer Islands <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Dutch presence in Indonesia (Dutch East Indies) before 1870 [<i>Non-examinable</i>] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Dutch trading interest in Indonesia since the late 16th century</li> <li>○ Impact of the bankruptcy of the VOC in 1800</li> <li>○ Pre-1870 administration of Dutch East Indies: Administration of Dutch in Java, role of the local elites</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Circumstances that led to extension of Dutch control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increased desire to build an empire and sphere of influence</li> <li>○ Need for raw materials, cash crops and to create an environment for investments</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Role of key players in Dutch extension to the Outer Islands</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Transformation of Indonesia under the Dutch after 1870 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Political: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increased Dutch control beyond Java through indirect rule <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increased centralised administration into the Outer Islands and the move towards greater local participation</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>– Economic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Growth and development of cash crop (sugar, rubber) and extractive industries (oil) and the creation of export-oriented economy</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Social: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Growth of plural societies and townships</li> <li>○ Emergence of Western-educated elites</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Local responses to the political, social and economic changes under Dutch rule</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		

Key Knowledge	Learning Outcomes (Knowledge and Skills)	Key Concepts
<p><b>OR</b> French Vietnam, 1870s–1920s</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extension of French control in Vietnam to Annam and Tonkin <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– French presence in Vietnam before 1870 [<i>Non-examinable</i>] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ French missionary and economic interest</li> <li>○ Significance of the Tay Son Rebellion on French presence in Vietnam</li> <li>○ Pre-1870 French administration in Cochin-China</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Circumstances that led to extension of French control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increased desire to build empires and spheres of influence</li> <li>○ Need for raw materials, new markets and new bases</li> <li>○ Internal instability due to the weaknesses of the Vietnamese court</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Role of key players in extension of French control</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Transformation of Vietnam under the French after 1870 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Political: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Consolidation of French political control over Vietnam</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Increased centralised administration beyond South Vietnam <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Economic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Development of cash crops (rice) and mineral industries (coal) and the creation of export-oriented economy</li> <li>○ Introduction of private property and state monopolies</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Social: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Migration within Indochina</li> <li>○ Emergence of local landowning class and landless peasants</li> <li>○ Emergence of Western-educated elites</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Local responses to political, social and economic changes under French rule</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>		

Key Knowledge	Learning Outcomes (Knowledge and Skills)	Key Concepts
<p><b>After World War I</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of World War I [<i>Non-examinable</i>]</li> <li>• Aims and terms of the Paris Peace Conference and its immediate impact on Europe in the 1920s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Treaty of Versailles and its immediate impact on Germany <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ War Guilt Clause, reparations, demilitarisation, territorial reductions</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Re-drawing of national boundaries and the creation of new nation-states <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Breakdown of old empires</li> <li>○ Self-determination</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Attempts at collective security in the 1920s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Successes and failures of the League of Nations at peacekeeping in the 1920s</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess the impact of post-war peace settlements on Europe.</li> <li>• Assess the attempts at collective security in the 1920s and its outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collective security</li> <li>• Self-determination</li> <li>• Balance of power</li> </ul>
<p><b>Rise of Authoritarian Regimes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of the attempts at establishing viable political systems after World War I [<i>Non-examinable</i>]</li> </ul> <p>Case Study of Nazi Germany*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circumstances leading to the rise and establishment of authoritarian rule in Germany <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Weaknesses of the Weimar government: problems of the Weimar constitution, unpopularity of the Weimar government</li> <li>– Appeal of Hitler and the Nazi Party <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Role of Hitler</li> <li>○ Methods of Nazi Party (use of propaganda and force, participation in elections)</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Economic challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Inflation, unemployment and Great Depression</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Consolidation of Nazi rule in Germany <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Establishment of Hitler's dictatorship and one-party rule</li> <li>– Economic policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Re-employment and improvement of working conditions and move towards war economy</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Social policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ German nationalism and persecution of ethnic and minority groups</li> <li>○ Control of and responses by German society</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate awareness of political developments after World War I.</li> <li>• Examine the rise of authoritarian regimes and evaluate their impact on the political, social and economic context of countries.</li> <li>• Evaluate the roles of key players in the establishment of authoritarian rule.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communism</li> <li>• Nationalism</li> <li>• Authoritarianism</li> <li>• Militarism</li> <li>• Parliamentary rule</li> </ul>

Key Knowledge	Learning Outcomes (Knowledge and Skills)	Key Concepts
<p>Case Study of Militarist Japan, 1920s–1930s</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circumstances leading to the rise and establishment of authoritarian regime in Japan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Weaknesses of the democratic government in Japan</li> <li>– Economic challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Inflation, unemployment, landlord-tenant disputes, Great Depression</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Appeal of ultranationalist faction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Military successes and political assassinations</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Increased influence of the militarists in Japan from the 1930s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Consolidation of military power in the government</li> <li>– Economic policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increased government control over industry and Campaign for Economic Revitalisation</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Social policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Militarisation of education</li> <li>○ Control of labour unions</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
<p><b>War in Europe and the Asia-Pacific</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key developments leading to the outbreak of World War II in Europe* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Ineffectiveness of the League of Nations in the 1930s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Failure of at disarmament in the 1930s</li> <li>○ Abyssinian Crisis (1935) and its implications</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Germany’s aggressive foreign policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Plebiscite in the Saar region, 1935</li> <li>○ Remilitarisation of the Rhineland, 1936</li> <li>○ Anschluss with Austria, 1938</li> <li>○ The Munich Agreement and the invasion of Czechoslovakia, 1938-1939</li> <li>○ Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact and the invasion of Poland, 1939</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Policy of appeasement</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Key developments leading to the outbreak of World War II in the Asia-Pacific <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Ineffectiveness of the League of Nations in the 1930s</li> <li>– Worsening of US-Japan relations</li> <li>– Japan’s expansionist foreign policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Aggression towards China from 1937</li> <li>○ Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere</li> <li>○ Bombing of Pearl Harbour, 1941</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate the reasons for the outbreak of World War II in Europe and the Asia-Pacific.</li> <li>• Evaluate the roles played by individuals and groups in developments leading to the outbreak of World War II.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appeasement</li> <li>• Theatres of war</li> <li>• Alliances</li> <li>• Expansionism</li> <li>• Militarism</li> </ul>

**Source-based case studies will only be set on the topics indicated by the symbol (\*).**

**Paper 2: Developments in the post-World War II World: The Cold War and Decolonisation in Southeast Asia, 1940s–1991**

**Focus**

This paper continues to trace the development of the shifting world order after World War II. Students will look specifically at the Cold War by examining the confrontation between the United States of America (USA) and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), and their emergence as superpowers during this period. They also examine the causes and consequences of this rivalry on Europe and Asia. The paper also explores the forces, developments and actors that shaped the decolonisation and the emergence of independent nations in Southeast Asia, and examines the interplay of Cold War tensions and local politics in the 1950s–1970s.

**Making Connections**

An understanding of the key developments of the Cold War and the decolonisation and establishment of independent nat states in Southeast Asia will enable students to make sense of the Southeast Asian region and world today. Through the study, students will also recognise that decisions and actions of individuals made in specific contexts can lead to momentous changes and have consequences on people and countries. This will in turn allow them to better relate and respond to present-day issues of geopolitical significance.

Key Knowledge	Learning Outcomes (Knowledge and Skills)	Key Concepts
<p><b>War in Europe and the Asia-Pacific</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reasons for end of World War II               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Strengths of the Allies                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ American entry into the war (economic resources and manpower)</li> <li>○ Allied strategies (D-Day, island hopping, dropping of the Atomic Bomb)</li> <li>○ Role of the Soviet Union</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Military weaknesses of Germany and Japan                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Germany                       <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ineffective command structure</li> <li>▪ War on two fronts</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Japan                       <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Overextension of empire</li> <li>▪ Inability to access raw materials from empire</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>Note: Teachers should note that, although detailed study of the military campaigns of World War II is not required, students will need to be aware of the major turning points of the war leading to the defeat of Germany and Japan.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess the reasons for the end of World War II.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflict</li> </ul>

Key Knowledge	Learning Outcomes (Knowledge and Skills)	Key Concepts
<p><b>The Cold War</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Origins and development of the Cold War in Europe* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– End of World War II and its impact on Europe <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Circumstances in post-war Europe</li> <li>○ Emergence of the USA and USSR as superpowers</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Growing mistrust between USA and USSR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Differences in ideology</li> <li>○ Breakdown of wartime alliances</li> <li>○ Division of Europe after World War II</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Intensification of superpower rivalry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ American containment policy: Political, economic and military actions</li> <li>○ Soviet responses: Political, economic and military actions</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Extension of the Cold War outside Europe: Case study of Korean War, 1950–53* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Post World War II developments in Korea <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Post-war occupation, partition of Korea, border clashes</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Emergence of communist China <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Expansion of a communist bloc, Sino-Soviet Alliance</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Outbreak of the Korean War <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Role of key players in the conflict: North Korea, South Korea, USA, UN, China and the USSR</li> </ul> </li> <li>– The Korean Armistice Agreement and the immediate aftermath <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Demilitarised zone, impact on US policy in Asia, escalation of tension between NATO and Warsaw Pact</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess the immediate impact of World War II on Europe.</li> <li>• Examine how Cold War tensions are manifested in Europe.</li> <li>• Assess the impact of rivalry between the USA and USSR in the aftermath of World War II.</li> <li>• Assess the impact of the emergence of communist China on Cold War tensions.</li> <li>• Assess the reasons for the outbreak of the Korean War and the Vietnam War, and their aftermath.</li> <li>• Evaluate the extent and impact of superpowers involvement in civil wars with reference to the Korean War and the Vietnam War.</li> <li>• Examine the immediate aftermath of the Korean War and the Vietnam War on Cold War developments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cold War</li> <li>• Bipolarity</li> <li>• Containment</li> <li>• Communism</li> <li>• Command economy</li> <li>• Democracy</li> <li>• Capitalist economy</li> <li>• Superpower rivalry</li> <li>• Proxy war</li> <li>• Civil War</li> </ul>



Key Knowledge	Learning Outcomes (Knowledge and Skills)	Key Concepts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extension of the Cold War outside Europe: Case study of Vietnam War, 1954–75               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Key developments in North and South Vietnam in the 1950s                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Partition of Vietnam in 1954, consolidation of communist control in North Vietnam and instability in South Vietnam                       <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discontentment over the Geneva Accords</li> <li>▪ Failure to carry out national elections in 1956</li> <li>▪ Unpopularity of Ngo Dinh Diem’s actions and the support from the North for the insurgency in the South</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>– Escalation of tensions between North and South Vietnam from 1954                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Role of key players in the conflict: North Vietnam, South Vietnam, USA, USSR and China</li> </ul> </li> <li>– The end of the Vietnam War and the immediate aftermath                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reunification of Vietnam, beginning of détente</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>Note: Teachers should note that, although detailed studies of the military campaigns of the Korean War and Vietnam War are not required, students will need to be aware of the major turning points of the wars.</i></p>		
<p><b>Decolonisation and establishment of newly independent nations in Southeast Asia</b>            British Malaya, 1945–1957 (Compulsory)*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developments leading to decolonisation               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Impact of World War II on decolonisation in Malaya                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Shift in local perceptions of the British</li> <li>○ Strengthening of local resistance groups</li> </ul> </li> <li>– British efforts in granting self-government and local responses                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Malayan Union, 1946 and Federation of Malaya, 1948</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Influence of Cold War on decolonisation in Malaya                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ British policy of decolonisation</li> <li>○ The Communist insurgency in Malaya</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Attainment of independence in 1957</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess the immediate impact of World War II on decolonisation in Southeast Asia.</li> <li>• Assess how the Cold War politics affected the struggle for independence in Southeast Asia.</li> <li>• Assess the responses by the European powers to Southeast Asia’s struggle for independence.</li> <li>• Assess how independence was achieved in Southeast Asia.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decolonisation</li> <li>• Nationalism</li> <li>• Sovereignty</li> <li>• Independence</li> <li>• Resistance</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> </ul>

Key Knowledge	Learning Outcomes (Knowledge and Skills)	Key Concepts
<p><b>EITHER</b> Dutch Indonesia, 1945–1949</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developments leading to decolonisation               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Impact of World War II on decolonisation in Indonesia                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Formation of local government</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Attempts at re-establishing Dutch rule in Indonesia and local responses                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Indonesian resistance, attempts at negotiation and peaceful resolution</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Communist revolt and its impact                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Indonesian Republican government’s response and US support in suppression of communism</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Attainment of independence in 1949</li> </ul>		
<p><b>OR</b> French Vietnam, 1945–1954</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developments leading to decolonisation               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Impact of World War II on decolonisation                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Change in local perceptions of French</li> <li>○ Strengthening of Vietnamese nationalist movements</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Attempts at independence                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Establishment of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Attempts at re-establishing French rule in Vietnam and local responses                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Vietnamese resistance, attempts at negotiation</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Declaration of Independence 1954</li> </ul>		

Key Knowledge	Learning Outcomes (Knowledge and Skills)	Key Concepts
<p><b>End of the Cold War</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of different phases of thawing and rising tensions between the USA and the USSR in the 1960s and 1970s <i>[Non-examinable]</i></li> <li>• Decline of the USSR and the end of the Cold War <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Ineffectiveness of Soviet command economy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Structural weaknesses and their effect on Soviet standards of living</li> </ul> </li> <li>– External economic burdens of the USSR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increased military spending</li> <li>○ Increased resistance within the communist bloc</li> <li>○ Commitment to Warsaw Pact</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Escalation of USA-USSR tensions in the 1980s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ USA economic might and the re-intensification of arms race</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Impact of Gorbachev's economic and political reforms on the USSR and its fall <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Failure to revive the Soviet economy</li> <li>○ Loss of confidence in the Soviet government</li> <li>○ Collapse of the Eastern European bloc</li> <li>○ Disintegration of the USSR</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess the reasons that led to the decline of the USSR.</li> <li>• Evaluate the reasons for the end of the Cold War.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cold War</li> <li>• Bipolarity</li> <li>• Détente</li> <li>• Arms Race</li> <li>• Diplomacy</li> <li>• Communism</li> <li>• Command economy</li> <li>• Democracy</li> <li>• Capitalist economy</li> <li>• Glasnost</li> <li>• Perestroika</li> <li>• Reform</li> </ul>

**Source-based case studies will only be set on the topics indicated by the symbol (\*).**