



# **ANCIENT HISTORY**

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General course

**Year 12 syllabus – What’s changing: Rationale and Aims  
For teaching in 2027**

## **Acknowledgement of Country**

Kaya. The School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) acknowledges that our offices are on Whadjuk Noongar boodjar and that we deliver our services on the country of many traditional custodians and language groups throughout Western Australia. The Authority acknowledges the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We offer our respect to Elders past and present.

## **Background**

As part of the Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) Refreshment for reviewing the nomenclature of courses, the Authority has updated the rationale and aims of each syllabus.

The revised rationale and aims are aligned with the mapping of the general capabilities to provide clear connections between the rationale, aims and syllabus content. The rationale outlines what the subject is about and why it is important. It describes what students can expect to study in the course, along with the knowledge, skills and understandings they will develop throughout the course. It also explains how these can be applied in everyday life and references potential future pathways, outlining how students might connect what they learn in the course to further education, training and employment opportunities.

## **Important information**

### **WACE Refreshment: Reviewing the nomenclature of courses**

This document contains information that will be included in the syllabus effective from 1 January 2027.

Users of the syllabus are responsible for checking its currency.

Syllabuses are formally reviewed by the Authority on a cyclical basis, typically every five years.

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## Rationale

The Ancient History General course explores early civilisations through the analysis of material and written remains, providing insight into the development of human societies across the world. Students gain an understanding and appreciation for the development and lasting impacts of ancient societies, while building historical skills which can be applied to the analysis of reliable evidence, enabling them to develop their curiosity and historical arguments.

In the course, students learn how values, beliefs and traditions contributed to the identity of a society. They investigate how the motivations of significant individuals impacted these societal identities and how there can be different perspectives of an individual historically and from their time. Students also learn about the internal and external forces which created and impacted conflict and resolutions in the ancient world. They look at how power was used by individuals and groups within a society, and the consequences, responses and impacts of this use of power.

Students learn historical skills that underpin the knowledge and understandings of the course. They develop their source analysis skills to evaluate and interpret sources for reliability, message and perspective. Students use this analysis of sources to develop evidence-based arguments when communicating their perspectives of ancient societies and significant individuals. As students progress through the course, their skills and confidence will improve their knowledge and understanding, leading to more mature and articulate arguments and analysis.

Students use historical skills, knowledge and understandings to identify patterns and similarities within societies, both ancient and modern. These comparisons allow students to appreciate and critically view current issues and benefits of their society, supporting informed decision-making and media literacy.

The Ancient History General course provides a strong foundation for careers in research, journalism, archaeology, history, anthropology, law, politics, consulting and education. The skills taught in the course are valuable in areas such as heritage management; public policy; state, federal and local government; archaeological consulting firms; mining and resource corporations; land councils; museums and universities. This course prepares students for academic and professional pursuits requiring strong interpretive and literacy skills, which benefit students looking at university pathways.

## Aims

The Ancient History General course aims to develop students’:

- ability to apply research, source analysis and critical questioning to investigate the past and effectively communicate historical findings
- ability to critically evaluate historical sources, recognise reliability, perspectives and evolving interpretations of events, people and societies
- understanding of the political, social, economic and cultural structures of ancient societies and their ability to analyse the influence of ideas, values and beliefs in shaping historical contexts
- understanding of the forces that drove continuity and change in the ancient world and their ability to apply historical knowledge to understand its relevance to contemporary societies.