HSC Ignition | Histories

Mateo Soriano, Class of ‘23

WHAT is History in Year 12?

HSC Subject Division

Modern & Ancient History

History in Year 12 is divided into two primary HSC pathways: **Modern History** and **Ancient History**.
There is also **Extension History** that will not be discussed in detail here.

Core Relationship

Shared Skills, Unique Natures

Both subjects demand a similar analytical skill set, yet each explores completely distinct historical contexts and source types.

Presentation Roadmap

- Essential skills and requirements common to **BOTH** history subjects
- Differentiating factors and unique aspects that make each course engaging

History Subject Demands

01 / Foundation

Content Mastery

Akin to biology and other HSIE subjects, you **MUST** be able to study, memorise, and **UNDERSTAND** a substantial volume of content.

02 / Academic Practice

“Doing History”

History is **NOT** just remembering facts. It requires higher-order skills:

- Deductive reasoning & inferences
- Constructing evidence-based narratives

Many students struggle because they memorise facts without learning to piece together narratives.

03 / Historiography

Varying Narratives

Requires you to understand and retell multiple perspectives across different historical contexts.

Always evaluate the range of **ideologies** that historians bring to their interpretations.

For your HSC Paper…

Exam Structure: There will be **FOUR sections** each totalling **25 marks** (100 marks total).

01 / SECTION ONE

Common Module

Contains 4–5 questions of varying lengths with source materials, concluding with an extended mini-essay. These can be anywhere from 1-15 mark questions.

- **Question Types:** Initial content-check questions leading into deeper analytical prompts. 1-2 Marks with 'identify' verbs vs. 15 mark 'evaluate'
- **Statewide Standard:** ALL students in the state complete this section, unlike your other sections, which are chosen by the school.
- **Key Differentiator:** You MUST know your stuff in the common module, in much more competitive detail because everyone does it.

02 / SECTION TWO

Ancient Societies OR National Study

Varies depending on subject pathway (Ancient vs Modern History):

Ancient History: Ancient Societies

3–4 questions with a concluding mini-essay, structured similarly to the Common Module.

Modern History: National Study

Your first full 25-mark essay requiring multiple body paragraphs and extended intro/conclusion.

For your HSC Paper…

Exam Structure: There will be **FOUR sections** each totalling **25 marks** (100 marks total).

03 / SECTION THREE

Personalities OR Peace & Conflict

Ancient: Personalities in their Times

2–3 big questions on one significant figure, requiring highly nuanced answers and targeted skills.

Modern: Peace and Conflict

Another 25-mark essay requiring broad knowledge across multiple sectors of notes.

04 / SECTION FOUR

Historical Periods OR Modern World

Ancient: Historical Periods

Full 25-mark essay on the historical period, incorporating multiple body paragraphs and remembered sources.

Modern: Change in the Modern World

Short-answer style responses concluding with a mini-essay at the end.

Ancient Vs. Modern

OVERVIEW
Ancient and Modern history employ fundamentally distinct methodologies in devising, sorting, and understanding historical narrative.

01 / PIECING NARRATIVES

Ancient History

Focuses heavily on piecing narratives together from limited, fragmentary evidence where a complete concrete story is often lacking.

- **Limited Evidence:** Bouts of sparse findings require inferential deduction.
- **Argumentation:** Demands utilizing core facts to build arguments on historicity and ideology.

02 / SOURCE ANALYSIS

Modern History

Ideologically focused and deeply analytical of specific sources, applying a distinct academic approach.

- **Source Evaluation:** Taught to explicitly recognize the value and bias of particular sources.
- **Grounded Narratives:** Evaluates ideological perspectives within structured historical contexts.

So… How Should I Study?

01 / PRIMARY STRATEGY

Active Revision

The first and **BIGGEST** tip is active revision. For every bit of new content, write practice questions and actually answer them.

02 / EFFICIENCY

Ditch Passive Reading

Reading notes will only affect your performance **minimally**. This is not an effective way to study for history.

03 / ALIGNMENT

Know Your Syllabus

EXTREMELY IMPORTANT. You MUST hit every syllabus dot point correctly to definitively answer HSC questions.

04 / PERSONALISATION

Custom Systems

Compartmentalise info in ways that work for **YOU**. Whether through intense organisation, flashcards, or booklets.

The CRAZIEST Study “Hack”

...Is actually not that crazy.

01 / CLASS DYNAMICS

Collaborative Bonding

Both Ancient AND Modern classes build an extremely close bond because no one is perfect at everything.

- **Four Modules:** Separated into four distinct modules per unit, each with its own nuances, facts, ideologies, and narratives.
- **Shared Strengths:** Support peers where you excel and rely on them where you need support.

02 / LEARNING PROCESS

Learning Together

You do NOT need to understand everything the first time you hear it.

- **Collaboration:** This is a skill that you learn to grow together with. Study sessions, shared responses, etc happen as you grow as a CLASS
- **Take what comes to you naturally:** There is so much content in these subjects that it is nigh-impossible to remember everything! So take what resonates and use that to answer more versatile questions

Effective Study Mindsets

01 / SUSTAINABILITY

Time & Space

IT IS SO IMPORTANT to give yourself time AND space within the HSC year.

- **Avoid Strain:** Work that intensely strains you will burn you out.
- **Maintain Effectiveness:** Overworking limits the true effectiveness of your study methods.

02 / WELLBEING & PROGRESS

Mental Health Matters

Taking steps to become a better student does NOT mean pushing yourself to the limit every night.

- **One Step at a Time:** Focus on small, manageable daily progress.
- **Be Proactive:** Plan your next small step instead of regretting what you haven't done.

Effective Study Mindsets

Understand where **YOU** are at and see where you can progress from here. The HSC is a competitive game that is relative to **YOUR** efforts and success. However, this does not mean you are alone!

Due to the way HSC scaling and ATAR calculations work, your results matter in relation to everyone else!

Little Sneak Peak of MY Study Methods



Little Sneak Peak of MY Study Methods





Thank You!

Any Further Questions? Come ask!