



Highfields State  
Secondary College

# Semester 1 - Course Overview

**Faculty:** Humanities  
**Subject:** Ancient History  
**Level:** 12

## Course Outline:

Ancient History is concerned with studying people, societies and civilisations of the past, from the development of the earliest human communities to the end of the Middle Ages. Students explore the interaction of societies and the impact of individuals and groups on ancient events and ways of life, enriching their appreciation of humanity and the relevance of the ancient past. Ancient History illustrates the development of some of the distinctive features of modern society that shape our identity, such as social organisation, systems of law, governance and religion. Ancient History highlights how the world has changed, as well as the significant legacies that exist into the present. This insight gives context for the interconnectedness of past and present across a diverse range of societies. Ancient History aims to have students think historically and form a historical consciousness. A study of the past is invaluable in providing students with opportunities to explore their fascination with and curiosity about stories of the past and the mysteries of human behaviour.

### Unit 3

In Unit 3, students investigate significant historical periods through an analysis of relevant archaeological and written sources. Students examine how these sources have been used to construct an understanding of relevant social, political, religious and economic institutions and practices, key events and individuals of a historical period. This unit allows for greater focus on historiography and challenges associated with an interrogation of evidence. Students analyse the usefulness of a wide range of sources and the contribution of research and scholarship to the reconstruction of a historical period. Students develop their understanding of changing interpretations over time and appreciate the contestable nature of history and the value of the ancient past. Key conceptual understandings include: usefulness and reliability of sources; perspectives; interpretations and contestability; evidence; continuity and change; cause and effect; significance; and empathy.

Key inquiry questions for this unit:

- How is meaning concerning certain periods of history constructed from historical evidence?
- What features, achievements and issues distinguish significant historical periods of Antiquity?

Students will complete two topics –

- **Topic 4: Fifth Century Athens (BCE)**
- **Topic 7: Pompeii and Herculaneum**

**Assessment:** *Summative assessment to be submitted in Year 12*

IA2: Investigation — independent source investigation (25%)

IA1: Examination — essay in response to historical sources (25%)

### Unit 4

In Unit 4, students investigate an ancient society in an important historical period, with a particular emphasis on the nature and exercise of power and authority in that society, and how it was challenged in times of conflict. Students also study an individual who had a significant impact on that society. Students develop an understanding of the importance of human agency, as demonstrated by the possible motivations and actions of individuals. This unit requires a greater focus on a range of written source material and an evaluation of the significance of the selected individual. It examines the key phases by which power and authority are challenged by conflict — causation, course, and consequences — and, through these, the important concepts of historical continuity and change. Other key conceptual understandings include: usefulness and reliability of sources; perspectives, interpretations and contestability; evidence; significance; and empathy.

Key inquiry questions to guide this unit:

- How was power and authority gained, maintained and challenged in the Ancient World?
- How does this understanding inform our modern perspectives on power?

Students will complete two topics –

- **Topic 5: Ancient Rome — Civil War and the breakdown of the Republic (School Selection)**
- **Topic 12: Julius Caesar (External Selection)**

**Assessment:** *Summative assessment to be submitted in Year 12*

IA3: Investigation — historical essay based on research (25%)

EA: Examination — short responses to historical sources (25%)