

OxfordAQA

International GCSE

History (9245)

Scheme of work

Peacemaking and the League of Nations

For teaching from September 2026 onwards
For International GCSE exams in June 2028 onwards

Contents

You can use the title links to jump directly to the different sections of this scheme of work
(Use Ctrl and click to follow the link)

Section title	Page
Introduction	3
Assumed coverage and teaching hours	3
Assessment	3
Resources	4
Part 1: Peacemaking following the First World War, 1919-23	5
The Paris Peace Conference	5
The main terms of the Treaty of Versailles	7
The impact of the treaty of Versailles	8
The wider settlement	9
Review	10
Part 2: The League of Nations and efforts to bring about a more peaceful world	11
The League of Nations	11
The contribution of the League to peace in the 1920s	13
Diplomacy outside the League	14
The reasons for the collapse of the League in the 1930s	15
Review for Part 2	16

Introduction

This scheme of work is intended to help teachers plan and implement the teaching of the Peacemaking and the League of Nations option of the Oxford AQA International GCSE History (9245) specification. The purpose is to provide advice and guidance to teachers, not to prescribe and restrict their approach to the specification. There are obviously many other ways of organising the work, and there is absolutely no requirement to use this scheme. We hope the suggested activities will support your teaching of this topic.

This study enables students to understand the complex and diverse interests of different individuals and powerful states. It looks at concepts such as self-determination, ideas of internationalism and the challenges of devising the peace settlement after the end of the First World War. It focuses on the instabilities caused by the peace treaties, militarism and global crises of international cooperation, and seeks to show how and why conflict occurred and why it proved difficult for the League of Nations to prevent conflict and preserve peace. It considers the role of key individuals and groups in shaping change.

Assumed coverage and teaching hours

This scheme of work assumes that the OxfordAQA International GCSE History (9245) is taught as a two-year linear course, with a total of approximately 120–140 guided learning hours in total, in line with specification guidance. This equates to two hours of teaching per week over two academic years, although this may vary according to local timetabling arrangements and students' prior experience. As this optional topic equates to one quarter of the qualification, this scheme of work is designed to be taught in around 30-35 hours.

Work will also need to be completed outside of lessons. The amount of independent study required will depend on curriculum time, the pace of delivery and the extent to which assessment practice and consolidation activities are incorporated into timetabled lessons.

Assessment

Assessment points in the learning activity column indicate possible assessment opportunities. These could be short tests of about ten minutes (exam-style questions, short factual tests, source evaluation) or longer assessments (exam-style source/interpretations questions).

The assessment in Section A is based on a series of short and extended questions in response to a group of primary and secondary sources (AO3). Different types of visual and written primary and secondary sources will be used in the assessment. A booklet containing three sources will be pre-released before the examination. Two unseen sources, which will not be included in the pre-release booklet, will also be assessed.

It is not permitted to bring any notes or annotations into the exam. A clean-copy source insert containing all five sources will be provided. The booklet of pre-release sources for Section A will be made available on 1 February for the summer series and 1 July for the Autumn series.

- Question 1 tests AO3 and is worth 4 marks. It is based on an unseen source. It requires students to use the source's content and/or provenance and their contextual

knowledge to support a given claim. The question will target Part 1 or Part 2 of the specification content.

- Question 2 tests AO3 and is worth 6 marks. It is based on one unseen source and one source from the pre-release booklet. It requires students to explain a difference between the sources using the content of each and their own knowledge. The question will target Part 1 or Part 2 of the specification content.
- Question 3 tests AO3 and is worth 8 marks. It is based on an unseen source. It requires students to use the content, provenance and their own contextual knowledge to evaluate how a source is useful to a historian studying a given issue. The evaluation of the source's limitations (ie how it is not useful) is not required. The question will target Part 1 or Part 2 of the specification content.
- Question 4 tests AO3 and is worth 12 marks. It requires student to analyse and evaluate a given issue or development using evidence drawn from the content of any of the sources and their own knowledge. Students should aim to use a range of the sources and link them together to support their reasoning. The question will target Part 1 or Part 2 of the specification content.

Resources

Research exercises assume students have access to a textbook(s) and / or the internet. You can supplement textbook(s) by other sources.

OUP support this option with 'International Relations: Conflict and Peace in the 20th Century' published in 2026 as part of the OxfordAQA International series and available in various formats.

A parallel product written for a similar AQA UK examination option contains supplementary material.

Part One: Peacemaking following the First World War, 1919-23

The Paris Peace conference

Suggested timing

3 hours

Specification content

The Paris Peace Conference: the aims of Clemenceau, Lloyd George and Woodrow Wilson; the Fourteen Points; self-determination and the formation of a League of Nations; the extent to which the peacemakers achieved their aims.

Teaching guidance

- The enquiry is based on describing and explaining the aims of the peacemakers – of the ‘Big Three’ as they are sometimes termed. Why did they hold different opinions? These lessons are linked to the next section which deals with the terms of the treaty and reactions to it, to analyse who was most/least satisfied with the settlement, and why.
- As a focus throughout the topic, students could consider, ‘How sensible or fair was the Treaty of Versailles?’.
- Here is an early opportunity to practice writing in response to sources/interpretations style questions on Paper 1, Section A. One method or approach is to develop a critical routine or programme which reconstructs the elements of source evaluation through a series of questions:
 - What does the source or interpretation tell us?
 - What can be inferred or suggested?
 - What differences can be identified between different sources or interpretations?
 - Explain the purpose or motive behind the work of the person who created the source or interpretation, ie provenance?
 - Referring to the historical context, ie use knowledge to test the validity of the source or interpretation.
- Though this is by no means the only permissible approach to AO3 questions there are chances for further practice throughout the Scheme of Work.

Possible teaching and learning activities

- Sources exercise: give your students a range of contrasting sources and interpretations that offer different views on the aims of the Peacemakers. Comment on the differences between the sources/interpretations you have chosen.
- Key profiles of the peacemakers (often referred to as the 'Big Three'): students prepare a fact file by matching profiles to statements about the peacemakers.
- Include references to the Fourteen Points, League of Nations as well information about Clemenceau and Lloyd George and their aims.
- Students prepare a table to describe and explain the aims of each leader. Create columns headed 'satisfaction/ dissatisfaction' for each leader – this can be populated during the next series of lessons.
- For each leader, report on why there were likely to be tensions and arguments between the Big Three – on why it was becoming more difficult to co-operate together in 1919. Feedback with a prediction of how this will affect the problems facing peacemaking at Versailles.

The main terms of the treaty of Versailles

Suggested timing

3 hours

Specification content

The main terms of the Treaty of Versailles: the 'Diktat'; territorial changes; military restrictions, war guilt and reparations.

Teaching guidance

- The focus on the terms and nature of the settlement.
- The emphasis should be on encouraging students to consider if the treaty was fair and/or sensible, not only at the time it was written, but also in hindsight. Was it the best that could have been achieved at the time and how far have later events altered our perceptions about the treaty?

Possible teaching and learning activities

- As knowledge is acquired through this section, think about how difficult it must have been to resolve the difficulties they faced when writing the terms of the peace treaty.
- Students produce a narrative of the terms of the treaty and annotate a map to illustrate some of the terms.
- Role play: students consider how would each of the peacemakers react to the key terms? Students justify their ideas and complete the table from the initial lessons using a column headed 'satisfaction/ dissatisfaction'.
- Students explain their answers.
- Class discussion based on hypothesis, for example, 'Wilson was the most dissatisfied by the terms of the Treaty of Versailles'. Do you agree or disagree?'
- Assessment point: students produce a written explanation of the answer to the hypothesis. Students then review each other's answer and discuss

The impact of the treaty of Versailles

Suggested timing

4 hours

Specification content

The impact of the Treaty of Versailles: the strengths of the Treaty and the difficulties it created; Germany's objections; reactions of the Allies.

Teaching guidance

- This part of the study again provides opportunities for students to develop an understanding of the Allies' and German reactions to the Versailles settlement. Was it fair and sensible? Analyse how far the treaty was a failure – or was it the best that could have been achieved in the circumstances?

Possible teaching and learning activities

- Using a range of sources and interpretations, different groups could consider if the arguments between the 'Big Three' about the treaty could have been avoided. Feedback to as part of a whole class discussion.
- When looking at a range of sources relating to Allied and German attitudes about the fairness of the treaty, group the sources for and against, and record the results.
- Students compare the sources for their utility based on content, purpose and knowledge.
- In groups, students discuss how fair the treaty was and then present a report. Students consider what is required when evaluating different types of sources and interpretations.
- Examples of responses to AO3 questions could be modelled and peer assessed.
- A card sort or diamond nine exercise could help students categorise the relative usefulness of different sources and interpretations which were used to contribute to a judgment about the fairness of the Versailles settlement.

The wider settlement

Suggested timing

3 hours

Specification content

The wider settlement: the peacemakers' treatment of Austria, Hungary and Turkey; strengths of the treaties and the difficulties they created for different states; the Treaty of Lausanne.

Teaching guidance

- This part of the study focusses on the way the Allies dealt with Germany's defeated allies. It lends itself to an analysis of the problems the wider settlement created not only for Europe but also for the individual states. How were some of these problems resolved?

Possible teaching and learning activities

- Using a range of sources and interpretations, different groups could consider how the aims of the Big Three were applied to Austria, Hungary and Turkey, and what problems they created for the future. Why was self-determination such a difficult principle when dividing the territories of these states?
- Students produce a fact file of the terms of the wider treaties and annotate a map to illustrate the terms.
- Students compare the sources for their utility based on content, purpose and knowledge.
- Examples of responses to AO3 questions could be modelled and peer assessed.
- Case study: write a report to the British government which details how and why Turkey changed the terms of its settlement and how far the Treaty of Lausanne satisfied its aims. Include the territorial changes on the map.
- Prepare a profile of Kemal Ataturk: who was he and why was he so important to Turkey after the First World War.

Review

Suggested timing

1 hour

Specification content

Review and assessment of Part 1: Peacemaking following the First World War, 1919-23

Assessment guidance

- This is the opportunity to develop your students' exam technique and to test their learning so far.
- You can use exam-style questions based on the content of Part 1.
- Students could be presented with contrasting sources and are asked to compare their usefulness in helping us to understand the impact of the Treaty of Versailles.
- Students could swap answers and identify ways of answering utility questions from model answers.

Resources

Specimen papers and Activities sections of the OUP textbook.

Part 2: The League of Nations and efforts to bring about a more peaceful world

The League of Nations

Suggested timing

3 hours

Specification content

The League of Nations: its formation and Covenant; the organisation, powers and peace-keeping role of the League; the Assembly; the Council; the Permanent Court of Justice; military and economic sanctions; the work of the League's agencies; membership and how it changed.

Teaching guidance

- While considering how and why the League was set up, the emphasis should be on its strengths and weaknesses, thereby judging its viability as a peace keeping organization. Perhaps students might keep in mind the enquiry question, 'Was the League of Nations bound to fail?'
- Opportunities again to practice writing in response to sources/interpretations style questions on Paper 1, Section A. One method or approach is to develop a critical routine or programme which reconstructs the elements of source evaluation through a series of questions:
 - What does the source or interpretation tell us?
 - What can be inferred or suggested?
 - What differences can be identified between different sources or interpretations?
 - Explain the purpose or motive behind the work of the person who created the source or interpretation, ie provenance?
 - Referring to the historical context, ie use knowledge to test the validity of the source or interpretation.

Though this is by no means the only permissible approach to AO3 questions, there are chances for further source evaluation throughout the Scheme of Work.

Possible teaching and learning activities

- Class debate: what characteristics should a peacekeeping organization have? Did the League of Nations meet these requirements in its covenant, formation and organization?
- Students research a timeline of the work and membership of the League in the 1920s – they might include examples of the humanitarian contributions made by its agencies.
- Students prepare a spider diagram of the League's organizations and agencies.
- Students look at a range of sources and interpretations which relate to the League's agencies in the 1920s and use them to assess the successes and failures of the League.
- Students take on the role of a government official at the time and write a report outlining what they think the prospects for the League are at the start of the 1920s. Students explain if they are optimistic and/or pessimistic for the League's future.
- Students consider the following question: which League agency do you think did the most valuable work and why?

The contribution of the League to peace in the 1920s

Suggested timing

5 hours

Specification content

The contribution of the League to peace in the 1920s: successes and failures, such as the Aland Islands, Upper Silesia, Vilna, Corfu and Bulgaria; the Geneva Protocols.

Teaching guidance

- Continuing the previous learning, with the emphasis on the League's strengths and weaknesses, students have the opportunity to study those disputes with which it became involved in the 1920s. How viable was the League as a peace keeping organization up to 1929?

Possible teaching and learning activities

- Students continue a timeline of the work of the League in the 1920s – to include a fact file or spider diagram about disputes and reasons for successes and failures.
- Students look at a range of sources and interpretations which relate to the League's peace keeping activities in the 1920s and use them to assess successes and failures of the League. Which sources and interpretations proved to be most useful in understanding the way the League handled these disputes? Why?
- Produce a short presentation about the importance of the Geneva protocol.
- Card sort/sequencing exercise to categorise the relative importance of different factors related to the League's work in the 1920s.
- Research the effects of the Wall Street Crash on the League of Nations.
- Class debate: 'In the 1920s, the League of Nations had more successes than failures.' Present arguments to agree and disagree with this assessment.

Diplomacy outside the League

Suggested timing

2 hours

Specification content

Diplomacy outside the League: The Locarno treaties and the Kellogg-Briand Pact; efforts to bring about disarmament in the 1920s and early 1930s.

Teaching guidance

- This study relates to the diplomacy which took place outside the work of the League of Nations. How important were these diplomatic efforts to reduce tensions between nations?
- Lessons might lend themselves to consider an enquiry question such as, 'Did Locarno and the Kellogg-Briand Pact help or hinder efforts to maintain world peace?'

Possible teaching and learning activities

- Students investigate the terms of the Locarno Treaty and the Kellogg-Briand pact and write a summary of the terms. They should then assess whether the terms were likely to improve the prospects for peace and justify their view.
- Research contemporary sources – what attitudes can you infer about these two agreements? Did more recent interpretations of 1920s diplomacy have different views from those at the time?

The reasons for the collapse of the League in the 1930s

Suggested timing

5 hours

Specification content

The reasons for the collapse of the League in the 1930s: the impact of the world economic depression; Japanese militarism and the Manchurian Crisis 1931–1933; the Abyssinian Crisis 1935–1936 and actions taken by the League; non-intervention in the Spanish Civil War; the League as a peacekeeping body in the lead up to the start of the Second World War.

Teaching guidance

- The focus should be on understanding some of the big challenges the League faced in the 1930s.
- What brought them about? How did the League and its members respond to these challenges? Why did it fail? How did the challenges impact upon international relations?

Possible teaching and learning activities

- Enquiry question: 'Why did the League of Nations fail in the 1930s?'
- Students complete a timeline of the challenges the League faced.
- Students look at a range of statements about why the League failed and then should collate information to support these statements.
- Students explore possible links between economic depression, and for example, the growth of nationalism or growth of international tensions.
- Manchuria and Abyssinia crises: students collate information about these crises and annotate a map of each area.
- Card sort: students categorise the causes of the League's failure in both Manchuria and Abyssinia and tabulate the results; study statement banks to assign relative importance to different factors which contributed to the League's failure.
- Source and interpretations exercise: students annotate a set of sources and measure their usefulness against content, purpose and knowledge. How far do these sources help us to understand why the League failed? What different explanations about the League's failure are represented?
- Students model a plan of questions based on sources and interpretations which seek to explain the League's failure. Assessment for learning – students might peer assess their own answers and discuss the characteristics found in a good answer.

Review for Part 2

Suggested timing

1 hour

Specification content

Review and assessment of Part 2: The League of Nations and efforts to bring about a more peaceful world

Assessment guidance

- This is the opportunity to develop your students' exam technique and to test their learning so far.
- You can use exam-style AO3 questions based on the content of Part 2.
- Assessment: students could be presented with contrasting sources and are asked to compare their usefulness in helping us to understand the work of the League.
- Peer assess and/or model an example of a student response.

Resources

Specimen papers and Activities sections of the OUP textbook.