

# Option B4 scheme of work



**Early Elizabethan England, 1558–88**  
GCSE (9-1) History

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Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9-1) in History (1HI0)

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## Introduction

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This document provides a sample outline scheme of work for **Early Elizabethan England, 1558–88**. This is intended as an example approach only and is not prescriptive: it should be adapted by schools to fit their timetabling and staffing arrangements.

The scheme assumes 12 teaching weeks for the British depth study.

The separate **Course planner** document provides a range of examples of delivery options that can be used for planning alongside this document.

The separate **Topic booklet** for Option B4 includes illustrative exemplification of content.

In adapting this scheme of work, teachers might find it useful to consider the following:

- What, and how much, background and contextual material needs to be covered as an introduction and overview before starting the main specification content. This is likely to depend on the school's KS3 programme of study and the extent to which students have already developed some familiarity with this period.
- The focus of the question types in the assessment of the British depth study:
  - Describe two features of...
  - Explain why...
  - '[statement]' How far do you agree? Explain your answer. (Any second-order concept)

| Week   |        | Specification content  |
|--------|--------|--|
| 3-year | 2-year |  |
| 1–3    | 1      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction and overview of option</li> </ul> <p><b>Key topic 1.1 The situation on Elizabeth's accession</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elizabethan England in 1558: society and government.</li> </ul>  |
|        | 2      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Virgin Queen: the problem of her legitimacy, gender, marriage. Her character and strengths.</li> <li>• Challenges at home and from abroad: the French threat, financial weaknesses.</li> </ul>  |
| 4–6    | 3      | <p><b>Key topic 1.2 The 'settlement' of religion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Religious divisions in England in 1558.</li> <li>• Elizabeth's religious Settlement (1559): its features and impact.</li> <li>• The Church of England: its role in society.</li> </ul>                               |
|        | 4      | <p><b>Key topic 1.3 Challenge to the religious settlement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The nature and extent of the Puritan challenge.</li> <li>• The nature and extent of the Catholic challenge, including the role of the nobility, Papacy and foreign powers.</li> </ul>                       |
| 7–9    | 5      | <p><b>Key topic 1.4 The problem of Mary, Queen of Scots</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mary, Queen of Scots: her claim to the English throne, her arrival in England in 1568.</li> <li>• Relations between Elizabeth and Mary, 1568–69.</li> </ul>   |
|        | 6      | <p><b>Key topic 2.1 Plots and revolts at home</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The reasons for, and significance of, the Revolt of the Northern Earls, 1569–70.</li> <li>• The features and significance of the Ridolfi, Throckmorton and Babington Plots. Walsingham and the use of spies.</li> </ul> |

| Week   |        | Specification content   |
|--------|--------|---|
| 3-year | 2-year |   |
| 10–12  | 7      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The reasons for, and significance of, Mary Queen of Scots' execution in 1587.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key topic 2.2 Relations with Spain</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Political and religious rivalry</li> <li>Commercial rivalry. The New World, privateering and the significance of the activities of Drake.</li> </ul>  |
|        | 8      | <p><b>Key topic 2.3 The outbreak of war with Spain, 1585–88</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English direct involvement in the Netherlands, 1585–88. The role of Robert Dudley.</li> <li>Drake and the raid on Cadiz: 'Singeing the King of Spain's beard'.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key topic 2.4 The Armada</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spanish invasion plans. Reasons why Philip used the Spanish Armada.</li> </ul>   |
| 13–15  | 9      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The reasons for and consequences of the English victory.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key topic 3.1 Education and leisure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education in the home, schools and universities.</li> <li>Sport, pastimes and the theatre.</li> </ul>   |
|        | 10     | <p><b>Key topic 3.2 The problem of the poor</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The reasons for the increase in poverty and vagabondage during these years.</li> <li>The changing attitudes and policies towards the poor.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key topic 3.3 Exploration and voyages of discovery</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Factors prompting exploration, including the impact of new technology on ships and sailing and the drive to expand trade.</li> </ul> |

| Week   |        | Specification content   |
|--------|--------|---|
| 3-year | 2-year |   |
| 16–18  | 11     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The reasons for and significance of Drake’s circumnavigation of the globe.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key topic 3.4 Raleigh and Virginia</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The significance of Raleigh and the attempted colonisation of Virginia.</li> <li>• Reasons for the failure of Virginia.</li> </ul> |
|        | 12     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Review and assessment of Early Elizabethan England, 1558-88</i></li> </ul>  |