SAMPLE COURSE OUTLINE

ANCIENT HISTORY
ATAR YEAR 11
(SAMPLE 2)
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### Sample course outline

**Ancient History – ATAR Year 11 (Sample 2)**

Semester 2 – Unit 2 – Ancient societies

This unit is based on Elective 1: Old Kingdom Egypt, Dynasty 0 to Dynasty 6

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Key teaching points</th>
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| 1–2  | Nature of the society **Chronological and geographical context**  
- an overview of the physical environment of ancient Egypt, including the geographic location, and the nature of the environment and its influence on the society  
- a brief overview of predynastic Egypt including the shift from nomadic lifestyle to the advent of farming, domestication of animals and political alignment of towns/villages  
- concept of ma’at (Order vs Chaos; ma’at representing justice and stability)  
- mapping activity – major sites and geographical features (including duality of Two Lands of Upper and Lower Egypt, plus Red Land and Black Land, the Faiyum and wadis)  
- availability of resources during the Old Kingdom (for example, the Eastern Desert’s importance for access to stone and minerals and Nubia for access to gold)  
- significance of the wadis as early trade routes – access into Sinai, Palestine, the Red Sea, for example Wadi Hamamat  
- overview of chronological context – timeline of predynastic, early dynastic and Old Kingdom periods  
- sources of evidence and problems associated with dating pharaonic rule (rival king lists)  
**Historical Skills**  
- Chronology, terms and concepts  
- Analysis and use of sources |
| 3–5  | Overview of the institutions and structures of Egyptian society  
**Social structure**  
- the main social hierarchies – Pharaoh and royal court, nobility, scribes, expert craftsmen and farmers  
- structure of the royal court – Pharaoh’s major and lesser wives, vizier  
- concept of the god-king, development of royal titulary  
- limitations of evidence relating to everyday life  
**Religious organisation**  
- the key features of religion/s, key state gods such as Osiris (consider Osirian mythology) and Horus  
- unique nature of Egyptian religious beliefs such as evolution of prominent gods (concept of syncretism)  
- the role and function of key religious institutions (cult centres, such as Heliopolis in Fifth Dynasty) and religious positions (role and influence of priesthood)  
- beliefs underlying burial practices from pit graves to mastaba, significance of grave goods, Cult of the Dead  
- creation myths and influence on tomb architecture (ben-ben stone)  
**Political institutions**  
- the key features of political organisation – extensive political powers of the pharaoh, role of provincial nomarchs, influence of priesthood on political system at this time  
- unification of Egypt – roles of individual kings (Scorpion Macehead and Narmer Palette, evidence of increased war-like activity at this time)  
- continued political rivalry between Upper and Lower Egypt in early dynastic era  
**Economic activities**  
- the nature and importance of economic activity – agriculture, trade and building programs  
- the organisation of corvee system for pyramid construction  
- economic exchange, for example, evidence of trade and taxation |
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|      | **Ancient historical narrative: Old Kingdom**  
**Evolution of pyramid shape; rise of pyramid building – Third and Fourth Dynasty**  
• the significant events and developments of the time-period, the causes of these events and developments, their impact; and the key individuals of the time-period, their role, motivations, contributions and legacy:  
  ▪ evolution of pyramid shape from mastaba to true pyramid  
  ▪ Sneferu’s three pyramids  
  ▪ architectural developments of pyramid building, such as corbelled ceiling, staircases  
  ▪ features of the pyramid complex, such as satellite pyramids, causeway, mortuary temple, funerary boats  
**Decline of pyramid building – Fifth and Sixth Dynasty**  
• evidence for the decline of quality, construction and materials used in pyramids; changing economic circumstances  
• changing roles of the god-king; rising power of nomarchs  
• rise of solar cult as reflected in development of sun temples  
• economic and political power of Heliopolitan priesthood as a potential threat to pharaonic power  
• features of sun temples (sacrificial altars, basins – Niuserre’s sun temple)  
• emergence of pyramid texts and significance of this – developing religious beliefs  
• famine stelae of Unas (Fifth Dynasty) as evidence of decline in economic conditions  
• other signs of change in state organisation  
• tomb biographies of Sixth Dynasty officials – Weni and one other, such as Harkhuf  
• major reasons for and evidence of collapse of the Old Kingdom – consider environmental, political, religious and economic factors  |
| 6–11 | **Task 8: Week 6: Essay/Extended answer**  
**Task 9: Week 8: Source analysis**  
**Historical Skills**  
• Chronology, terms and concepts  
• Analysis and use of sources  
• Perspectives and interpretations  
• Explanation and communication  |
| 12–14 | **Significant features of Egyptian society**  
Investigate one of the following significant features employing an historical inquiry process and the Historical Skills.  
• art in Old Kingdom Egypt  
• role, status and importance of Royal women in Old Kingdom Egypt  
• the family in Old Kingdom Egypt  
• the military in Old Kingdom Egypt  
• beliefs, rituals, and festivals in Old Kingdom Egypt  |
|      | **Task 10: Week 12: Begin Historical inquiry**  
**Task 11: Week 14: Historical inquiry validation essay**  
**Historical Skills**  
• Chronology, terms and concepts  
• Historical questions and research  
• Analysis and use of sources  
• Perspectives and interpretations  
• Explanation and communication  |
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<td>15</td>
<td>Revision</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Task 12: Semester 2 examination</td>
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</tbody>
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