# Big History – 200-hour sample scope and sequence

This example is provided as a guide only. Schools will operate their department approved electives based on school and students’ needs and local context.

Table 1 – Big History 200-hour scope and sequence (Year 9)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Topic | Timing | Outcomes | Assessment |
| What is Big History?20 hours | Term 1 – Year 98 weeks | BH5-1, BH5-3, BH5-5, BH5-6, BH5-8, BH5-9 | Not formally assessed |
| Big Bang10 hours | Terms 1 and 2 – Year 94 weeks | BH5-1, BH5-2, BH5-4, BH5-6, BH5-8, BH5-9 | Origin stories |
| Stars and galaxies10 hours | Term 2 – Year 94 weeks | BH5-1, BH5-2, BH5-3, BH5-5, BH5-10 | Not formally assessed |
| New chemicals10 hours | Terms 2 and 3 – Year 94 weeks | BH5-1, BH5-4, BH5-5, BH5-6, BH5-7 | Lifecycle of a chemical |
| Planetary bodies20 hours | Term 3 – Year 98 weeks | BH5-1, BH5-3, BH5-7, BH5-10 | Big history in objects |
| Life30 hours | Terms 3 and 4 – Year 912 weeks | BH5-1, BH5-3, BH5-5, BH5-8, BH5-9, BH5-10 | Invent a species |

Table 2 – Big History 200-hour scope and sequence (Year 10)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Topic | Timing | Outcomes | Assessment |
| Humans30 hours | Terms 1 and 2 – Year 1012 weeks | BH5-1, BH5-2, BH5-3, BH5-4, BH5-7, BH5-8, BH5-9 | Research task |
| Agriculture and civilisations30 hours | Terms 2 and 3 – Year 1012 weeks | BH5-2, BH5-3, BH5-4, BH5-5, BH5-7, BH5-8, BH5-9 | Invent a civilisation |
| Our connected world30 hours | Terms 3 and 4 – Year 1012 weeks | BH5-1, BH5-4, BH5-7, BH5-8, BH5-9, BH5-10 | Object file |
| The future10 hours | Term 4 – Year 104 weeks | BH5-2, BH5-4, BH5-6, BH5-8, BH5-9, BH5-10  | Not formally assessed |

[Big History course document](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/department-approved-courses/big-history) © NSW Department of Education for and on behalf of the Crown in the State of New South Wales, 2021.

## Additional information

The information below can be used to support teachers when using the sample scope and sequence for Big History.

### Rationale

This course is designed for students curious about seeking answers to big questions regarding the history and development of our universe, including the origin of our species. It promotes reasoned predictions of future events. Collaboration among students, teachers, scholars and scientists is the foundation of Big History. It places human history in the broader context of the universe’s history.

Throughout history, humans have collaborated in creative endeavours leading to a dynamic body of knowledge which is continually refined and contested as evidence evolves. This knowledge provides explanations for various phenomena and enables sense to be made of the development of human society.

In Big History, students will develop deep knowledge, understanding and skills that will allow them to create new ideas and translate their ideas into practical applications. Through engaging with varying sources and perspectives, students will develop problem-solving, research and critical thinking skills, and demonstrate respect for differing viewpoints. Through the integrated study of the cosmos, life and humanity, students will use empirical evidence to develop a deeper appreciation of the evolution of knowledge systems and the complex relationship between evidence and ideas.

Big History addresses the need for students to use interdisciplinary understanding to solve problems and develop critical thinking skills to assess the validity of claims of knowledge. The course will build upon the learning across the curriculum content, including the general capabilities priorities from the NSW syllabus documents, that encompass the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours to assist students to live and work successfully in the 21st century.

### Aim

This course aims to develop students’ understanding of the history of the universe from the ‘Big Bang’ to the modern day and beyond, through an exploration of the themes and patterns that can help us better understand the world we live in. Big History will develop students’ ability to synthesise complex information, hypothesise and develop arguments, develop key critical thinking skills and enhance their reading, writing and research skills in a multidisciplinary way.

### Purpose and audience

This resource is for teachers and leaders to provide examples of how outcomes can be mapped across the course. It also provides suggested patterns for assessment of learning at key stages in the course and models a possible sequence for core and option modules.

### When and how to use this document

Use this document when designing a pattern of study for students to achieve course outcomes. The timing and combination of outcomes and assessment can be tailored to meet the needs of students in different contexts.

## Support and alignment

This resource has been designed to support schools with successful implementation of new curriculum, specifically the NSW Department of Education approved elective course, Big History © NSW Department of Education for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales, 2021.

The resource is produced to assist schools with promoting and implementing the course for the first time. As the course may be taught by teachers from a range of key learning areas, the resource is designed to support teachers from a variety of KLAs.

**Resource evaluation and support**: all curriculum resources are prepared through a rigorous process. Resources are periodically reviewed as part of our ongoing evaluation plan to ensure currency, relevance and effectiveness. For additional support or advice, or to provide feedback, contact the Teaching and learning 7–12 curriculum team by emailing secondaryteachingandlearning@det.nsw.edu.au.

**Differentiation:** further advice to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, EAL/D students, students with a disability and/or additional needs and High Potential and gifted students can be found on the [Planning, programming and assessing 7–12](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/planning-programming-and-assessing-k-12/planning-programming-and-assessing-7-12) webpage. This includes the [Inclusion and differentiation advice 7–10](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/planning-programming-and-assessing-k-12/planning-programming-and-assessing-7-12/inclusion-and-differentiation-advice-7-10) webpage.

**Assessment**: further advice to support formative assessment is available on the [Planning, programming and assessing 7–12](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/planning-programming-and-assessing-k-12/planning-programming-and-assessing-7-12) webpage. This includes the [Classroom assessment advice 7–10](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/planning-programming-and-assessing-k-12/planning-programming-and-assessing-7-12/classroom-assessment-advice-7-10-). For summative assessment tasks, the [Assessment task advice 7–10](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/planning-programming-and-assessing-k-12/planning-programming-and-assessing-7-12/assessment-task-advice-7-10) webpage is available.

**Professional learning**: relevant professional learning is available on the [Teaching and Learning 7–12 statewide staffroom](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/statewide-staffrooms).

**Consulted with**: Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships, Inclusion and Wellbeing and EAL/D.

**Alignment to system priorities and/or needs**: [School Excellence Policy](https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2016-0468).

**Alignment to the School Excellence Framework**: this resource supports the [School Excellence Framework](https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2016-0468) elements of curriculum (curriculum provision) and effective classroom practice (lesson planning, explicit teaching).

**Alignment to Australian Professional Teaching Standards**: this resource supports teachers to address 2.2.2, 2.3.2, 3.2.2, 7.2.2.

**Creation date**: 26 October 2021.

**Evidence base**:

‘The long-term vision is for a curriculum that supports teachers to nurture wonder, ignite passion and provide every young person with knowledge, skills and attributes that will help prepare them for a lifetime of learning, meaningful adult employment and effective future citizenship’ (NESA 2020:xi).

NESA registration process for the NSW government schooling system indicates ‘the scope and sequence of learning/units of work mapped against the content and outcomes.’ (NESA 2021a:11) Department approved electives need to maintain this approach. The sample scope and sequence shows an option to ‘plan the scope and sequence of lessons from the syllabus to systematically build student understanding of skills, concepts and content knowledge’ (CESE 2020a:11).

The scope and sequence is a sample, as ‘international evidence that increased local decision making in relation to the curriculum is associated with higher levels of student performance’ (NESA 2020:52).

NESA also acknowledge the importance of a quality scope and sequence to support teaching and learning. They indicate that essential elements to be included in a school’s documented curriculum are ‘a scope and sequence and associated learning programs for each course, including teaching activities mapped against NESA syllabus outcomes and content, and including registration and evaluation’ (NSW Department of Education 2021:7).

This sample scope and sequence aligns with this advice.

## References

[Big History course document](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/department-approved-courses/big-history) © NSW Department of Education for and on behalf of the Crown in the State of New South Wales, 2021.

CESE (Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation) (2020a) [*What works best: 2020 update*](https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/educational-data/cese/publications/research-reports/what-works-best-2020-update), NSW Department of Education, accessed 15 November 2022.

CESE (Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation) (2020b) [*What works best in practice*](https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/educational-data/cese/publications/practical-guides-for-educators-/what-works-best-in-practice), NSW Department of Education, accessed 15 November 2022.

NESA (NSW Education Standards Authority) (2020) [*Nurturing Wonder and Igniting Passion, designs for a new school curriculum: NSW Curriculum Review* [PDF 1.12MB]](https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-04/NSW-Curriculum-Review-Final-Report.pdf), NESA, accessed 15 November 2022.

NESA (NSW Education Standards Authority) (2021a) ‘[NSW Registration Process for the Government Schooling System Manual](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/regulation/government-schooling/registration-process-government-schooling)’, NESA, accessed 15 November 2022.

NESA (NSW Education Standards Authority) (2021b) ‘[Advice on scope and sequences](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/understanding-the-curriculum/programming/advice-on-scope-and-sequences)’, Programming, NESA website, accessed 15 November 2022.

State of New South Wales (Department of Education) (2021) ‘[Curriculum Policy Standards: Implementation document for Curriculum planning and programming, assessing and reporting to parents K–12 policy](https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2005-0290)’, NSW Department of Education, accessed 15 November 2022.

**© State of New South Wales (Department of Education), 2024**

The copyright material published in this resource is subject to the *Copyright Act 1968* (Cth) and is owned by the NSW Department of Education or, where indicated, by a party other than the NSW Department of Education (third-party material).

Copyright material available in this resource and owned by the NSW Department of Education is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) license](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).



This license allows you to share and adapt the material for any purpose, even commercially.

Attribution should be given to © State of New South Wales (Department of Education), 2024.

Material in this resource not available under a Creative Commons license:

* the NSW Department of Education logo, other logos and trademark-protected material
* material owned by a third party that has been reproduced with permission. You will need to obtain permission from the third party to reuse its material.

**Links to third-party material and websites**

Please note that the provided (reading/viewing material/list/links/texts) are a suggestion only and implies no endorsement, by the New South Wales Department of Education, of any author, publisher, or book title. School principals and teachers are best placed to assess the suitability of resources that would complement the curriculum and reflect the needs and interests of their students.

If you use the links provided in this document to access a third-party's website, you acknowledge that the terms of use, including licence terms set out on the third-party's website apply to the use which may be made of the materials on that third-party website or where permitted by the *Copyright Act 1968* (Cth). The department accepts no responsibility for content on third-party websites.