

# OMNEX\*

Please write clearly in block capitals.

Centre number

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Candidate number

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Surname

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Forename(s)

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Candidate signature

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## GCSE HISTORY OF MATHEMATICS

### Paper 1 Elizabethan England (1558-1603)

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Saturday 16 May 2026

Afternoon

Time allowed: 1 hour 15 minutes

#### Instructions

- Use **black** ink or ball-point pen.
- **Fill in your name** at the top of this page.
- If you **want a chance to win a prize**, answer **all** the questions in Section A and return the page or the answer slip on the back to the exhibitor stand 16 (History & Maths) **before 2pm on 16<sup>th</sup> May**.

#### Information

- This exam is a thought experiment – what if GCSE History incorporated some of the history of mathematics? The material would fit naturally within the Elizabethan England syllabus, because mathematics played a key role in trade, culture, politics and exploration during the period.
- Section A is worth 6 marks. Section B is just there for curiosity - the maximum total mark for the whole paper would be 40.
- The candidate scoring the most marks for Section A will win a twelve-inch British history ruler **signed for this conference by Tom Holland** of *The Rest is History*.
- In the event of a tie, the winner will be drawn from a hat.

#### Advice

- Read each question carefully before you start to answer it.
- Try to answer every question.



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\* *OMNEX is an imaginary exam board that believes in the interconnectedness of all school subjects*

**SECTION A**

Each question has only one correct answer and is worth 1 mark.

**1. Which of the following was a statutory measurement of length in 1600?**

- (a) One Metre
- (b) One Chain
- (c) One Furlong
- (d) One League

**2. What was the primary purpose of the 1593 Weights and Measures Act under Elizabeth I?**

- (a) To standardize the length of the foot when designing ships.
- (b) To create a uniform system of measurement for fair trade and commerce.
- (c) To regulate the production of measuring tools, such as scales and balances.
- (d) To establish a national system for measuring agricultural yields.

**3. Which of the following is a correct example of how Elizabethan numeracy used a duodecimal system:**

- (a) Weighing silver and gold used 12 ounces for one pound
- (b) Currency was divided into 12 shillings in one pound.
- (c) Length was measured with 12 inches per yard.
- (d) All of the above.

**4. In the liberal arts, the quadrivium of mathematics subjects was arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and which other subject?**

- (a) Trigonometry
- (b) Algebra
- (c) Chance
- (d) Music

**5. In Elizabethan England, university mathematics lectures were primarily taught in which language?**

- (a) English
- (b) French
- (c) Latin
- (d) Greek

**6. Which of the following would have been used in a typical 16<sup>th</sup> Century university maths lecture?**

- (a) Chalk and a blackboard
- (b) A protractor
- (c) An abacus
- (d) None of the above

**SECTION B** Answer all questions in this section. There isn't quite enough space provided.

7. Explain one advantage that led to Indo-Arabic numerals replacing Roman numerals in Elizabethan England. **(2 marks)**

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8. Explain two ways in which mathematics helped the English navy to defeat the Spanish Armada in 1588 **(4 marks)**

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9. *"I cannot do it without counters" – shepherd, The Winter's Tale (Shakespeare).*

What does the shepherd's comment suggest about numeracy in Elizabethan society?  
Give examples of how numeracy was used and learned by people who did not attend grammar school. **(8 marks)**

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10. "Mathematics was considered an essential part of education in Elizabethan England."  
To what extent did this apply to different levels of society? **(8 marks)**

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11. Evaluate the extent to which mathematics influenced, and was influenced by, the development of trade, exploration, and education during Elizabeth I's reign. **(12 marks)**

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**PRIZE COMPETITION ENTRY SLIP:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Answers: (1)  (2)  (3)  (4)  (5)  (6)