

History

Course Type: A Level

Exam Board: Edexcel

Course Entry Requirements: Standard Five GCSE subjects at a minimum grade 4 or the equivalent including Maths and English. (Please note that it is not essential to have studied History at GCSE level)

Why Study History?

If you enjoy the study of the past, both for its own sake and for the light it throws on the present, then A Level History is for you. The study of History trains you to select relevant information, assess the validity of an argument, think and write logically, make informed judgements about controversial issues and present a well-ordered case backed by supporting evidence. The skill most developed by History is that of critical analysis and the ability to express ideas, knowledge and interpretations clearly and coherently.

History is one of the most sought after A-level subjects. The skills it develops are highly desirable and whether you wish to pursue a future in the law, journalism, politics, management or business, History has something to offer you.

What Will I Study? Course Content

Students will study three papers and one piece of coursework during their A Level History course. Each paper is designed to develop historical skill and understanding of particular areas of history from a range of periods.

Paper 1 focuses on the changing nature of politics, economics and society within Germany from the end of the First World War in 1918, to the collapse of West Germany in 1989, such as the changing nature of control exercised by government, and the changing nature of attitudes towards ethnic minorities. Students will focus on these changes both thematically, and chronologically. This paper also contains a study in depth of historical interpretations on a broad question which is contextualised by and runs parallel to the themes. For this paper, the focus here will be how far Hitler's foreign policy was responsible for the Second World War.

Paper 2 focuses on a study in depth of Spain in the years 1930 – 78, a dramatic year for Spaniards which spanned years of democracy, dictatorship and then democracy again and led to the modern Spanish state. Students will gain and understanding of the changing politics and society of a nation that underwent the turbulence of the Second Republic and civil war followed by a period of right-wing dictatorship from which a modern democracy emerged.

Paper 3 focuses on Protest, agitation and parliamentary reform in Britain from 1780 – 1928. This paper comprises two parts: The aspects in breadth focus on long-term changes and contextualise the aspects in depth which focus in detail on key episodes. Together, the breadth and depth topics explore the relationship between authority and mass agitation in England, the struggle for greater representation in England and the ways in which the interests and concerns of individuals in society could make themselves known. Within the primarily political focus, this option also gives students the opportunity to explore the economic and social contexts and their influence on developments and on the pressures for change.

Coursework: The coursework component of the A Level qualification asks students to explore a range of historical Interpretations in order to assess how responsible Germany were for the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. Students are expected to analyse and evaluate a range of chosen historians and reach a judgement highlighting who they believe to hold the most persuasive Interpretation regarding the question focus.

Students opting to take A Level History will also be required to complete a piece of coursework that enables them to develop skills in the analysis and evaluation of interpretations of history in a chosen question, problem or issue as a part of an independently researched assignment.

The focus is on understanding the nature and purpose of the work of the historian. Students will be required to form a critical view based on relevant reading on the question, problem or issue. They will also be specifically required to analyse, explain and evaluate the interpretations of three historians.

How will I be assessed?

The course is examined on the basis of one coursework unit and three examined papers.