



GCSE History

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Why study GCSE History?

History at GCSE is a dynamic and popular subject that will provide students with useful skills and fascinating knowledge about the past. It is a highly relevant subject, equipping young people with the ability to use sources to weigh up evidence and to reach and justify conclusions. These skills are not only transferable to other subjects but are also highly valued by employers. The topics studied are varied and interesting, giving our students an insight into past societies and current problems. History students can go on to pursue a wide range of careers, including business, finance and law.

What does the course involve?

There are five modules of study examined in three papers at the end of year 11:

Medicine in Britain c.1250 to present – our thematic study which explores how we progressed from leeches and superstition to antibiotics and the NHS.

The British sector of the Western Front, 1914-18: injuries, treatment and the trenches – our historic environment study investigating how surgeons and doctors dealt with pain, bleeding and infection on the battlefield.

The American West c.1835-c.1895 – our exciting period study module that explores and challenges many of the stereotypes of 'the Wild West', from cowboys and Indians to mountain men and the Gold Rush.

Henry VIII and his Ministers, 1509-40 – our British depth study looking at Cardinal Wolsey, Thomas Cromwell and Henry's religious Reformation.

Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-39 - our non-British depth study that enables students to focus on one era and explore how and why historical interpretations of it differ.

The History department uses a wide range of teaching methods to enthuse students and to prepare them for their exams. Students will often work in small groups or pairs, and will have frequent opportunities to share their ideas with others. Source work is a major part of the History GCSE and students will be offered a wide range of source materials to study, including text, images and film. The History department also uses active learning, so that students of all preferred learning styles can access the course fully.

How will I be assessed?

All modules are now assessed by examination, with students sitting three separate papers which cover the four units, as listed below. There is no internally assessed Controlled Assessment.

Paper 1 – British thematic study with a Historic environment

Medicine in Britain c1250 to present & The British sector of the Western Front; Injuries, treatment and trenches. Exam structure – 52 marks (30% weighting) 1 hour 15 min exam

Paper 2 – period study & British depth study

The American West c1835-c1895 (20%).

Henry VIII and his Ministers 1509-40 (20%).

Exam structure – 64 marks (40% weighting) 1 hour 45 min exam

Paper 3 – Modern Depth Study

Weimar and Nazi Germany 1918-39.

Exam structure – 52 marks (30% weighting) 1 hour 20 min exam

What are my progression routes?

History teaches you many skills, which employers and universities value, such as communication, research, analysis and empathy. Studying History at GCSE will help you with other GCSE and A-level essay subjects like English Literature, Languages, Media Studies, Law, Politics, Philosophy, Psychology, Economics and Sociology, as it helps you develop both writing and analysis skills. It can also be really useful alongside a science subject or Maths to broaden your knowledge and abilities.