

History

History is vital to our understanding of the world around us and the forces that shape the present and the future. At A Level, History seeks to answer such significant questions as: What causes civil wars and revolutions? How can individuals come to dominate their own and other countries? What forces bring about fundamental changes in society and politics? To what extent and why have the causes and nature of warfare changed over time? Why do some groups have to struggle to achieve equal rights? History does this through the study of particular events, individuals and developments in British, European and American History.

The prime focus at A Level is on explanation, evaluation and analysis. The study of history aims not only to increase your knowledge and understanding of the key factors that have shaped our world but also to cultivate your ability to think critically, produce coherent and compelling arguments, to research effectively and communicate clearly. That is why History A Level is so highly regarded by both top universities and employers and is considered relevant for a wide range of career paths, from the City to the Cabinet, top management to the diplomatic corps and law to journalism.

History A Level is divided into four modules, two at AS Level and two at A2 Level. This structure permits study of a range of topics and themes over the two years. Topics at AS currently include Tsarist Russia 1855-1917, Britain 1902-1918, The Reformation in Europe C1500-1564, The Church in England: the Struggle for Supremacy, 1529–1541. At A2 one module will examine the theme of The State and the People. It will address change and continuity, and require candidates to show understanding of approximately 50 years of History in both breadth and depth. Subject areas will include The Angevin kings of England; 1154-1215, The triumph of Elizabeth: Britain 1547 –1603, The British monarchy; the crisis of the state, 1642 -1689. The second A2 module will require students to write and submit a Historical enquiry that will test their understanding of 100 years of History. This may be focused on the growth of American civil rights in the 19th and 20th centuries or the development of German nationalism, 1815 – 1919. Teaching and learning are varied and will help you to develop key skills. There are visits to conferences and exhibitions, and a biannual study visit to Russia.

You do not have to have studied History at GCSE to study it at AS/A Level, but it is a distinct advantage to have done so. It is also important to enjoy reading, discussion and argument.

Exam board: AQA