



Hartismere College



History

Edexcel A- level History

- Britain, 1625–1701: conflict, revolution and settlement
- Russia in Revolution: 1894 - 1924
- Civil rights and race relations in the USA 1850- 2009
- Coursework

A STUDENT'S GUIDE TO THE A LEVEL IN HISTORY

Welcome to the history department. History is a fascinating subject and the course is stimulating, challenging and fun.

It can provide either a stand-alone qualification or form part of a structured foundation for further study.

A study of A-Level History will encourage you to become more independent and analytical in the way you think.

The aim of this booklet is to provide you with the information you need about studying history in the sixth form. Should you wish to ask any other questions or clarify any detail you should speak to Miss Driscoll or any member of the History team who will be glad to help.

What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?

Some of the topics offered for study are developments from GCSE but there are also plenty of topics offered which are likely to interest most new students.

It is more important that you have an enquiring mind, a genuine interest in the past, its relevance to current affairs and an ability to communicate your ideas effectively.

It is not a requirement that you have studied history at GCSE in order to take an Advanced GCE course but a minimum grade 5 in English is required for these students.

Those students who have studied History GCSE will find that the skills they have learned and the knowledge they have acquired will form a solid foundation for further studies at Advanced GCE. These students will usually be required to have achieved at least a grade 5 in the subject.

At Hartismere, we study Edexcel A level History.

What kind of student is this course suitable for?

The course will appeal to students who:

- Have an interest in the way that the world has developed through the ages;
- Enjoy investigation and discovery;
- Enjoy debate and like putting forward a well-argued case;
- Want to improve their analytical skills;
- Want to study a subject which encourages them to consider evidence and make up their own minds;
- Want to keep their options open.

History can be a useful choice for a wide range of careers and be combined with a wide range of sciences, social science and humanities subjects.

What will I learn on this Advanced GCE course?

During your course you will learn:

- About the significance of events, individuals, issues and societies in history;
- How and why societies have changed over time;
- About the theories of historians and the language that they use to discuss their ideas;
- To understand the nature of historical evidence and the methods used by historians to analyse and evaluate it;
- To develop an understanding of how the past has been interpreted and represented;
- To express your own historical ideas confidently and effectively.

How is the course structured and what topics are taught?

Students taking the A-level will study four components, 3 of these will be examined papers and one component is independently completed coursework. The examinations will be assessed in the same exam series at the end of two years of study. The components are:

Edexcel A- level History

- **Paper One:** Britain, 1625–1701: conflict, revolution and settlement
- **Paper Two:** Russia in Revolution: 1894 - 1924
- **Paper Three:** Civil rights and race relations in the USA 1850- 2009
- **Coursework**

Students who sit these examinations will be awarded an A-level qualification.

Year 12 topics

In year 12 you will study:

Paper 1: Breadth Study - Britain, 1625–1701: conflict, revolution and settlement

This option comprises a study in breadth, in which students will learn about key features of monarchical and republican rule in Britain in the seventeenth century, set within the context of broader social, economic and religious change. The events of this period saw a decisive shift in the balance of power between crown and parliament. The focus of study is on developments and changes over a broad timescale and so the content is presented as themes spanning a significant duration: 1625–88. This option also contains a study in depth of historical interpretations on a broad question that is contextualised by, and runs on from, the themes: how revolutionary, in the years to 1701, was the Glorious Revolution of 1688–89?

Content 1 The quest for political stability, 1625–88

- The failure of monarchical government, 1625–46
- Republican rule, 1649–60
- From restoration to revolution, 1660–88:

Content 2 Religion: conflict and dissent, 1625 - 1688

- The Church of England
- The growth of religious nonconformity
- The Catholic question

Content 3 Social and intellectual challenge, 1625–88

- Population changes and its impact
- The changing structure of society
- A ferment of ideas

Content 4 Economy, trade and empire, 1625 - 1688

- Agriculture changes and its impact
- Changing domestic trade patterns
- The impact of imperial expansion

Historical interpretations Content: How revolutionary, in the years to 1701, was the Glorious Revolution of 1688 – 1689?

- The significance of revolutionary ideals in the establishment of a constitutional monarchy. How revolutionary, in the years to 1701, was the Glorious Revolution of 1688–89?
- The impact of the Toleration Act 1689 and the end of Anglican supremacy
- The significance of the Triennial Act 1694 and the growth of parliamentary power
- The importance of William III's wars in the development of a financial revolution

Examination:

Written exam: 2 hours 15 minutes

- Three questions (one compulsory)
- 60 marks
- 20% of A-level

Questions:

Three sections:

- Section A – one essay from a choice of two (1x 20 marks)
- Section B – one essay from a choice of two (1 x 20 marks)
- Section C - One compulsory question assessing the ability to analyse and evaluate historical interpretations (20 marks)

Paper 2: Depth Study - 2C Russia in revolution 1894 - 1924

This option comprises a study in depth of the causes, course and consolidation of the Russian Revolution of 1917, which had a momentous effect on twentieth-century Russia and throughout the modern world. Students will gain an in-depth understanding of revolutionary activity in Russia in the years 1894 to 1917, the response of successive governments to opposition to their rule, and the reasons for the successful consolidation of the revolution of October 1917 under Lenin and the Bolsheviks.

Content 1 The rule of Nicholas II, 1894–1905

- The nature of autocratic rule
- Opposition to Tsarism
- The 1905 Revolution
- Nicholas II's response

2 The end of Romanov rule, 1906–17

- Change and continuity in government
- Repression and reform, 1906–14
- The impact of the First World War
- The February Revolution

Content 3 The Provisional government and its opponents, February–October 1917

- The nature of dual power
- Opposition to the Provisional government
- The second Provisional government, July–October
- The October Revolution

Content 4 Defending the Bolshevik revolution, October 1917–24

- Consolidating Bolshevik power
- Bolshevik economic policies
- Defeat of domestic enemies
- Foreign intervention in Russia

Examination:

Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes

- Two questions (one compulsory)
- 40 marks
- 20% of A-level

Questions:

Two sections:

- Section A – one compulsory question linked to historical sources (20 marks)
- Section B – one essay from a choice of two (1 x 20 marks)

Year 13 topics and examinations

In year 13 you will study:

Paper 3: Breadth Study - 39: Civil rights and race relations in the USA 1850 - 2009

This option 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 developments that have shaped contemporary America and remain a fundamental issue in US society: the changing pattern of race relations between black and white Americans, both in terms of civil rights and also broader social and cultural changes over a period that began with millions of black Americans in slavery and ended with Barack Obama as President.

Aspects in breadth: emancipation and moves towards greater equality

The changing geography of civil rights issues

- The changing geographical distribution of black Americans 1850–2009
- The changing pattern of settlement and segregation 1850 - 2009

Changing portrayal of civil rights issues in fiction and film

- The role of literature in shaping and reflecting changing perceptions of race relations, 1850–2009
- The role of visual portrayals in influencing and reflecting changing perceptions of race relations 1850–2009

Aspects in depth: emancipation and moves towards greater equality

Content 1 'Free at last', 1865–77

- Reasons for, and importance of, the Thirteenth Amendment 1865
- Radical Reconstruction, 1867–77
- The backlash

Content 2: The triumph of 'Jim Crow' 1883 - 1900

- Impact of the Civil Rights Cases 1883 in the Supreme Court
- The spread of Jim Crow Laws
- The impact of Plessy v. Ferguson 1896; Williams v. Mississippi 1898; Cumming v. Board of Education 1899

Content 3: The New Deal and race relations 1933 - 1941

- The influence of southern whites in the Democrat Party
- The failure to address black grievances
- Impact of the New Deal

Content 4: 'I have a dream' 1954 - 1968

- Civil rights activities, 1954–63
- Civil rights 1964-68
- Increasing divisions within the movement for Civil Rights

Content 5: Obama's campaign for the presidency, 2004–09

- The importance of the political career of Barack Obama to 2006
- The reasons for his success in gaining the Democratic nomination for the presidency
- The reasons for victory in November 2008

Examination:

Written exam: 2 hours 15 minutes

- Three questions (one compulsory)
- 60 marks
- 30% of A-level

Questions:

Two sections:

- Section A – one compulsory question linked to historical sources (20 marks)
- Section B – one essays from a choice of two on aspects in depth (1 x 20 marks)
- Section C - one essay from a choice of two on aspects in breadth (1 x 20 marks)

Component 4: Coursework

Topics for this are subject to change depending on the specialism of the teacher

The purpose of the coursework is to enable you to develop the skills, knowledge and historical understanding acquired through the study of the examined components of the specification.

Through undertaking the coursework you will develop an enhanced understanding of the nature and purpose of history as a discipline and how historians work.

You will be required to submit a historical investigation based on a development or issue which has been subject to different historical interpretations.

Your work will:

- Be independently researched and written;
- Be presented in the form of a piece of extended writing of between 3000 and 4000 words in length;
- Draw upon your analysis of historians which relate to the development or issue chosen

The coursework contributes towards meeting the aims and objectives of the A-level specification. In particular, students will be marked on:

1. Identification of, selection from, and deployment of material relevant to an aspect of historical debate
2. Ability to reach and sustain an overall judgement about a matter of historical debate in its historical context
3. Analysis and explanation of differences in historians' views
4. Evaluation of, and judgement on, historians' arguments
5. Demonstration of understanding of relevant concepts and organisation and communication of a concisely-formulated argument.

Assessment:

- 3000-4000 words
- 40 marks
- 20% of A-level
- marked by teachers
- moderated by Edexcel

How can I develop my full range of skills by doing this course?

As well as covering advanced level study of history, this course will enable you to develop some key skills which will be essential to you whatever you go on to do afterwards. The key skills you can develop during this course are:

- Communication;
- Information technology;
- Problem solving;
- Working with others;
- Improving your own learning and performance.

History A level offers you plenty of opportunities to acquire key skills. Opportunities will arise naturally during lessons. They might include presenting your ideas to the rest of your group, taking part in discussion, using a computer database for research or working in a small group to investigate a historical problem.

What could I go on to do at the end of my course?

Students who study Advanced GCE History have access to a wide range of career and higher education opportunities. By the end of your course you will have learned a variety of transferable skills including how to evaluate and analyse information, how to weigh up evidence and how to communicate complex ideas effectively.

These skills are in great demand and are recognised by employers, universities and colleges as being of great value. History combines well with a range of science, social science and humanities subjects to create an attractive portfolio of qualifications, enabling you to move on to university courses in such areas as business, economics, law, media, philosophy, languages and, of course, History.

Students who choose not to go on to higher studies will have well developed transferable skills that will allow them to explore a wide range of employment opportunities.

What work will I be expected to do?

In lessons you will be expected to take part in a wide range of activities which include the following:

- Research
- Note taking
- Discussion
- Group and individual presentations.

Outside lessons you will be expected to undertake at least 5 hours private study a week at home or in school. This may increase towards the end of both the year 12 and 13 programme of study when you will be preparing for exams.

What do I do if I feel as though the course is too hard or I am getting behind with my work?

The monitoring system in the sixth form is very efficient and difficulties should be identified quickly by teaching staff and the sixth form team. There will be individual tutorial sessions for all sixth form students to deal with precisely these kinds of issues.

You must be prepared to communicate – talk to your teachers. It is much better to tackle a problem early when a relatively simple solution is possible rather than let it grow into a large problem that is more difficult to deal with.

In the 6th form you will be able to access Google Classroom resources, subject reading in the Reading Room and have communication with your teachers via school email.

Summary**History is:**

- Interesting, challenging and fun
- Easily mixed with a variety of other subjects
- Recognised as a subject that promotes transferable skills and valued by employers and institutions of higher education.

The Department is:

- Well organised and resourced
- Enthusiastic
- Committed to making sure your results are the best you can achieve.

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