

History

Examination board: OCR

History is a rigorous and well-respected A Level that develops the skills of critical thinking, analysis and extended writing. A Level History pupils develop their ability to research independently, to formulate a well-substantiated argument and they will also grapple with issues of historical interpretation.

The study of history at A Level opens many doors and history pupils go on to take a wide range of university degrees. These include closely-related courses, such as History and Ancient History, as well as law and PPE, but also in medicine and engineering, for example.

Historians are ideally suited to any career that requires an awareness of context, the ability to judge the value of data, and a degree of lateral thinking. The study of the past better equips pupils to understand the present, as well as the future possible direction of our global society.

The course will follow the OCR specification. Across the two years of the Sixth Form, pupils will cover three taught units, the details of which are given below. These are assessed through final examinations in the summer of the Year 13. There is also a compulsory coursework element which accounts for 20% of the overall grade.

Unit 1: The Early Stuarts and the Origins of the Civil War 1603–1660 (Enquiry topic: The Execution of Charles I and the Interregnum 1646–1660)

Why did the English kill their own monarch? Why did England not remain a republic, having executed King Charles I? How did a farmer, Oliver Cromwell, become the most important man in the country and one of most influential in all of English history? What factors led a Dutchman being invited to sit on the English throne?

Pupils will study this fascinating, and sometimes overlooked, period of English history. There is plenty to capture the interest of pupils; the seventeenth century was a time of rebellions, civil war and political

radicalism every bit as dramatic as our own times. Moreover, developments that took place under the Stuarts also explain much of why our present-day parliament, society and monarchy operate as they do. This unit is assessed through a 1 hour 30 minute examination, accounting for 25% of pupils' overall grade.

Unit 2: Russia 1894–1941

Few countries have as fascinating, varied and dramatic a history as Russia. Pupils will learn about the end of the 400-year-old Romanov Dynasty and the revolutions of 1917, which sent reverberations throughout the twentieth century world. From there, the course covers the leadership of Vladimir Lenin and how the ideal of the Communism led to the horrors of the Terror and the rule of Stalin, the dictatorial 'Red Tsar'. The unit concludes with the transformation of Russia from an under-developed rural state to a great military and industrial power.

This unit is assessed through a 1 hour examination, accounting for 25% of pupils' overall grade.

Pupil will also write a 3000 – 4000 word essay on question arising out of this unit of study. This work, which is internally marked and externally moderated, accounts for 20% of the final grade.

Unit 3: The Middle East 1908–2011: Ottomans to Arab Spring

This final unit of study will immerse pupils in the culture, politics and history of the Middle East. The course covers a broad sweep of the region's recent past from the end of the Ottoman Empire, via the founding of new nations, the 1979 Iranian revolution, Western military interventions and finally the popular uprisings of the 2011 Arab Spring. Pupils will gain a sense of the longer term forces that have shaped the Middle East, as well as examining the different interpretations of the topic's key historical questions. This unit is assessed through a 2 hour 30 minute examination, accounting for 40% of the overall grade.