

Why History?

History is a popular A level subject. In 2016/2017 twenty nine students (21% of the year groups) study the subject.

- Firstly, you should choose History because you find the study of how people lived in the past, the study of how societies functioned and changed over time, and why, and how power was distributed, fascinating.
- Secondly, you should choose History because you enjoy the debate and argument, and relish the challenge of deciding for yourself why things happened in the way that they did.
- Thirdly, you should choose History because it is a highly regarded subject for developing “transferable skills” – see below.

Course content

The structure of the course is a linear one with all A level qualification exams taking place at the end of Year 13 in addition to the submission of one piece of coursework. In line with school policy, all students will complete exams at the end of Year 12 which will give a stand-alone AS qualification for students not continuing their studies to the full A level qualification.

The course content in Year 12 centres on the theme of nationalism, dictatorship and democracy in twentieth century Europe, focussing upon in-depth studies of Germany and Italy. In Year 13 students will study a British history option and complete one piece of coursework based upon a topic which realises differing historical interpretations and debate.

Year 12

Paper 1G: Germany and West Germany, 1918-1989

This unit comprises a study in breadth, in which students will learn about key political changes experienced in Weimar Germany 1918-1933, Nazi Germany 1933-45 and in West Germany after the Second World War, 1945-1989.

The focus of the study is on developments and changes over a broad timescale, examining four distinct themes:

- Political and governmental change**
e.g. *How a Nazi dictatorship was established in Germany and the reestablishment of a democratic West Germany*
- Opposition, control and consent**
e.g. *How the Treaty of Versailles contributed to political extremism; Nazi methods to control the German people; the challenges highlighted by terrorist groups such as the Baader Meinhof Gang and the Red Army Faction*



iii. **Economic development and policies**

e.g. *The impact of hyperinflation and the Great Depression on Weimar Germany; the economic consequences of Total War and the post war German 'economic miracle'*

iv. **Aspects of Life and Society**

e.g. *Cultural experimentation in 1920s Berlin, Nazi policies towards women and children; De-nazification policies; attitudes towards ethnic minorities in post war Germany and the impact of the Berlin Wall*



In addition to these four themes there is also a study in depth of historical interpretations which is contextualised by, and runs parallel to the themes. This is a study of **how far Hitler's foreign policy was responsible for causing the outbreak of the Second World War.**

Paper 2G.2: The rise and fall of fascism in Italy, c1911-1946

This unit examines key developments in the history of Italy in the first half of the twentieth century from the political instability of the liberal democratic state, through the rise and fall of Mussolini's fascist dictatorship, to the return to democracy and the creation of an Italian republic in 1946.

The focus of the study is on the features of, the reasons for and consequences of the specified events and changes in each of the four following topics:

i. **The Liberal State c1911-1918**

e.g. *Political instability, impact of the first world war and the defeat at Caporetto*



ii. **The rise of Mussolini and the creation of a fascist dictatorship, 1919-1925**

e.g. *How and why Mussolini came to power; the March on Rome*



iii. **The fascist state, 1925-1940**

e.g. *Consent and control; the cult of Il Duce; indoctrination, repression and terror, and relations with the Catholic church*

iv. **Challenges to and the fall of the fascist state c 1935-1946**

e.g. *Mussolini's foreign policy and relations with Britain, France and Germany; the Pact of Steel; the impact of the Second World war on Italy; Mussolini's death and subsequent referendum and elections.*



The study of History in Year 13 involves one examined topic in Paper 3 together with the completion of one coursework assignment.

Paper 3: Option 31-Rebellion and Disorder under the Tudors, 1485-1603

The focus of this unit is on two given themes on aspects of breadth covering a range of over 100 years and five identified key topics in depth.

The aspects in breadth look at the way in which Tudor government changed, both at the centre and in relation to the localities over the period. This involves looking at the key developments and turning points, understanding the reasons why key changes were made, why they were made, why they were important and what their main effects were. For example, examining the impact of the Acts of Supremacy of 1534 and 1559 and the Relief of the Poor Act of 1598.

Aspects in depth require students to look in detail at five key topics which link into the overall breadth study, and will require students to interpret and evaluate a documentary extract in its historical context.

Topic 1: **Challenging the succession, 1485-1499**

Topic 2: **Challenging religious changes, 1533-1537**

Topic 3: **Agrarian discontent: Kett's rebellion, 1549**

Topic 4: **Queen takes Queen? The revolt of the northern earls, 1569-1570**

Topic 5: **Troublesome Ireland: Tyrone's rebellion, 1594-1603**



Coursework Historical Interpretations of the Holocaust

Coursework is compulsory in all GCE specifications and the purpose of this coursework is to enable students to develop skills in the analysis and evaluation of interpretations of history in a chosen question, problem or issue as 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 topic. They will be specifically required to analyse, explain and evaluate the interpretations of three historians using a given template.



The coursework topic is chosen to examine the disagreements which historians have had about the Holocaust. For example, the extent to which the Holocaust was a long term plan, where responsibility for the Final Solution lies, Hitler's personal role in the Final Solution and the origins and causes of the Holocaust.



Students are required to select three different historical interpretations and with reference to these viewpoints they have to:

- Analyse the ways in which interpretations of the question, problem or issue vary
- Explain the differences identified
- Evaluate the historian's arguments, indicating which viewpoints are most persuasive, giving reasons for the judgement

The coursework is closely monitored and managed and the recommended length of the assignment is between **3000** and **4000 words**.

Edexcel GCE History: An overview – Route G: Nationalism, Dictatorship and Democracy in Twentieth Century Europe

Year 12	Year 13
<p>Paper 1G: Germany and West Germany, 1918-1989</p> <p>Examined at the end of Year 12 for AS level qualification (60% of total AS level marks).</p> <p>Examined at the end of Year 13 for A level qualification (30% of total A level marks).</p> <p>2 hours 15 minutes</p>	<p>Paper 3; Option 31-Rebellion and Disorder under the Tudors, 1485-1603</p> <p>Examined at the end of year 13 for A level qualification (30% of total A level marks).</p> <p>2 hours 15 minutes</p>
<p>Paper 2G.1: The rise and fall of fascism in Italy, c.1911-1946</p> <p>Examined at the end of Year 12 for AS level qualification (40% of total AS level marks).</p> <p>Examined at the end of Year 13 for A level qualification (20% of total A level marks).</p> <p>1 hour 30 minutes</p>	<p>Coursework: An independently researched historical enquiry</p> <p>An independently researched historical enquiry relating to the historical debate surrounding the Holocaust, involving students to develop skills in the analysis and evaluation of interpretations of history in a chosen question. (20% of total A level marks)</p> <p>Completed in Year 13 for A level qualification</p>

Skills

In addition to studying interesting content the Edexcel course develops key historical skills in the examination papers and coursework. In particular students will develop organisational and communication skills in their understanding of the period studied, in addition to making substantiated judgements, evaluating primary source material and analysing the different ways in which aspects of the past have been interpreted.

In general, History develops the following very marketable skills:

- **Communication skills** – lessons characteristically involve lots of discussion which should develop your oral and debating skills. Written assignments are expected to be fluently expressed in an appropriately mature style. History is a literary subject and highly valued precisely because it develops reading and writing skills so well.
- **Analytical skills** – especially in the selection, interpretation and evaluation of large bodies of information, often presented in a variety of forms.
- **Presentational skills**- essay assignments, as well as class presentations train historians to assemble, organise and communicate a formal “case” in which the arguments, opinions and interpretations, are effectively supported by relevantly selected evidence, facts and quotations. These skills prove very useful in a large range of jobs.
- **Research skills** – you will be expected to prepare assignments, and develop note making skills independently. Wide reading is essential for real success in the subject. Ideally, you should find this pleasurable.
- **Empathetic skills** – the subject deals with people. We study motives, beliefs, values and feelings, both of individuals and groups. This should promote maturity and sensitivity.

All of these skills are vital when attending university or heading into the world of work today.

History and other subjects:

History is a very versatile discipline in that it combines with virtually any other A Level subject either from the arts or humanities. Recently, many students have combined History with a maths/science option. They have found History a refreshing change, whilst appreciating the analytical challenges it presents. They have benefited from developing the skills which the subject necessarily demands. In recent years for example students of History went to highly regarded universities to study subjects ranging from Law, Journalism and Modern History to Forensic Psychology, Pharmacology and Education. For detailed examples please refer to the departmental sheet *'Destinations of Students who have studied History A Level.'*

Careers

- A Level History provides a valuable foundation for a wide range of careers including:
- Financial work together with banking and accountancy
- Social and welfare work
- Journalism and media
- Sales, marketing and administrative management
- Law
- Teaching
- Academic research

Visits

Arrangements are made for students to attend relevant History lectures and conferences where appropriate. Year 12 History and Politics students visit the Houses of Parliament and other London sites.

Sixth Form History and GCSE

Whilst it is beneficial to have studied GCSE History, it is not a requirement to study the subject in the Sixth Form. An interest in the subject content together with literacy and analytical skills are of comparable value. If in doubt then ask a member of the departmental staff.

