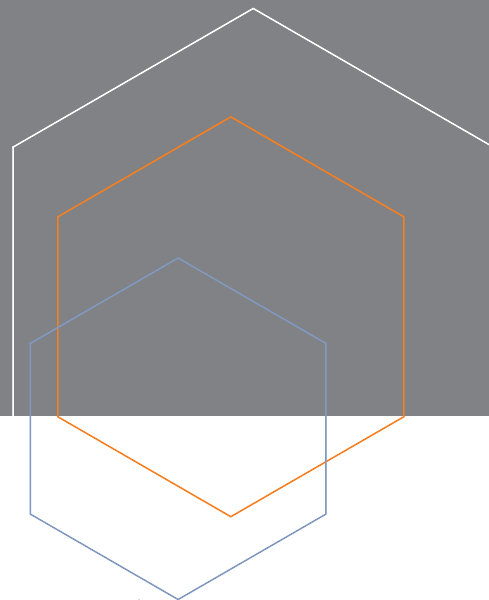


A Level HISTORY

Specification: Edexcel A



What will I study?

We are changing this year to the Edexcel A Level course. This involves three papers and an NEA. **Paper 1 is a breadth study with interpretations**, while **Paper 2 is a depth study with sources**. The topics in Papers 1 and 2 are linked thematically and meet the requirement to study two different countries. Paper 3 meets the requirement to study change over at least 100 years.

Paper 1: In search of the American Dream: the USA, c1917–96

This breadth study explores how the idea of the “American Dream” evolved across the 20th century, focusing on political, social, and cultural changes in the USA from 1917 to 1996. It examines whether the dream was achieved, for whom, and how it was challenged.

- The Changing Political Environment (1917–1980)
- The Quest for Civil Rights (1917–1980)
- Society and Culture in Change (1917–1980)
- Developments after 1980 (to 1996)

Paper 2: South Africa, 1948–94: from apartheid state to ‘rainbow nation’

This depth study looks at how South Africa moved from a rigid apartheid system to a democratic “rainbow nation.” It focuses on political, social, and economic developments, resistance movements, and the role of key individuals and organisations.

- Establishing Apartheid (1948–61)
- Development of Apartheid (1961–78)
- Challenges to Apartheid (1968–83)
- Collapse of Apartheid and Transition (1984–94)

Paper 3: Rebellion and disorder under the Tudors, 1485–1603

This depth study explores how Tudor monarchs maintained authority in a period marked by political instability, religious upheaval, and social unrest. It

examines the effectiveness of Tudor government and the nature of challenges to royal power.

- Changes in Governance at the Centre (1485–1603)
- Gaining Co-operation of the Localities
- Challenging the Succession (1485–1499)
- Challenging Religious Changes (1533–37)
- Social and Economic Discontent (e.g. Kett’s Rebellion)
- Later Challenges (Northern Earls’ Revolt, Tyrone’s Rebellion)

Coursework: independent choice

- Your choice of historical investigation topic.
- Independent investigation, drawing on sources, interpretation and your own areas of interest.
- Skills-based support from staff whilst you investigate an historical debate.

Furthermore, because we give you an independent choice for your coursework, in building the investigation skills for this you will cover a wide range of topics in history including:

- Was King John bad, mad and dangerous to know?
 - Were child labourers in Victorian factories really treated badly?
 - Who deserves the credit for abolishing slavery?
- And many other topics, including the one you choose for your major investigation.

How will I be assessed?

Paper 1: Breadth Study with Interpretations

- **Time:** 2 hours 15 minutes
- **Weight:** 30% of A Level

Focus: Long-term developments + historical interpretations.



Paper 2: Depth Study

- **Time:** 1 hour 30 minutes
- **Weight:** 20% of A Level
- Focus: Detailed study of a specific period.

Paper 3: Themes in Breadth with Aspects in Depth

- **Time:** 2 hours 15 minutes
- **Weight:** 30% of A Level
- Focus: Broad themes + depth elements + interpretations.

Coursework (NEA)

- **Word count:** 3,000–4,000 words
- **Weight:** 20% of A Level
- Focus: Independent historical investigation.

How will I learn?

Just like in GCSE, the key skills are analysing material (facts, sources, events), explaining historical change and continuity and reaching your own judgements based on the evidence. Key teaching tools include articles, books, lectures and essays.

However, these skills can also be developed in a variety of creative ways including: role plays, decision-making activities, narrative accounts (photo stories, videos), and using a range of other tools such as documentaries, trips and debate. We will make use of all of these throughout the course.

What skills will I need?

- Love of reading
- Willingness to ask questions and participate in class discussions
- Ability to write coherently, with strong literacy skills
- Enjoyment of finding out about past civilizations and cultures
- Ability to analyse information critically

Careers & Progression

History is widely valued as a subject that teaches critical thinking, understanding of the world today, how to structure arguments and ideas, and how to understand people and their behaviour.

It is also highly valued in careers that build on these skills such as law, journalism, politics, and teaching.

