

A LEVEL HISTORY FAQs

Q: What is the layout of the exams?

Both exams (AQA 1C The Tudors and 2R The Cold War) follow the same layout- one 30 mark source question, and then two 25 mark essays out of a choice of three. The source question focuses on primary sources for the Cold War and historian viewpoints for the Tudors. The essays have the same marking criteria for both papers which means that you can really consolidate your exam skills over the two years.

Q: Is A Level History the same as GCSE History?

The big difference is that you get to fully submerge yourself in our two exam topics, and learn the content in lots of detail, rather than having lots of topics to learn. As above, there is also less different types of questions and therefore the focus is on developing your analytical and evaluation written skills to a high level, which are great transferable skills for degree level in a wide variety of subjects.

Q: Is there a lot of writing?

History A Level is quite academic, which does mean there is quite a lot of reading and writing, but don't worry, we build these skills in very gradually. This is why we would like two Grade 5's from History, Language and Literature from GCSE.

Q: Will I be at a disadvantage if I haven't taken History GCSE?

Not at all! Although there are some similar skills from GCSE, we teach all the skills from scratch and there will be no difference in terms of skill development.

Q: What is homework like in History?

In history you will receive a mixture of knowledge learning and skill development. As you move through the course, there will be a greater proportion on the latter.

Q: What are the average class sizes in History?

As in line with the college, the maximum class size is 25, but normally the average is around 20- we find that this is perfect for debates and group skill development, and smaller than you current school classes!

Q: How many lessons a week do I have in History?

As with all of your subjects, you get 3 lessons per week and each lesson is 1.5 hours.

Q: Which subjects are best to take alongside History?

Politics is natural combination, because there are lots of crossover of topics, and there are similar skills in Geography and English Literature and Language. Languages are a good choice too, because we cover some French, German and Spanish history. We are popular now if you are looking to take two sciences or Maths because History helps to show breadth when applying for universities, with one well-regarded essay subject. But we have had lots of successful students who study a wide range of courses from business to drama!

Q: What employability skills will I learn from studying History a level?

Here is what some of our outgoing Yr13's have said:

"I feel that the course has helped me gain confidence, analysis skills and essay skills which will be useful at university."

"Essay writing, organisation, independence and being able to articulate myself thanks to class discussion"

"Analytical skills when critically evaluating sources and interpretations for my coursework"

"Essay skills are going to be the most useful for me as I'll be needing these skills for uni"

"Analysis, judgement, validity of argument. Combining source skills alongside essay writing techniques has helped me form strong arguing skills using valid evidence as well as a strong ability to judge historical extracts and argument. Such skills are largely transferable with analysis being fundamental in many professions"

"Spent the most time out of any of my classes on furthering essay skills, which while not the most interesting part of the course really helped me with essay structure."

"Being able to identify interpretations, essay writing incl footnoting for the coursework, learning to pick and choose the best evidence to use in an argument."

Q: Where can History A Level take you?

The transferable skills are why it is a traditional choice for top Russell Group universities and Oxbridge, and why it is often a desirable subject for Law degrees. Being a facilitating subject, it has skills that are useful for all degree courses, apprenticeships, and the skills learnt with us will help you in employment too.

Here are some comments from recent students who are currently at University:

"I am currently in my first year studying languages at Cambridge and having done history A level has honestly prepared me for the academic demands of further study better than any other A level course. I have found that the essay writing and analytical skills you develop during this course can so easily be transferred and will be useful for any kind of study you may do in the future. I loved how the topics are so diverse- from the end of Medieval period in 1485 to the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989!"

"I really loved expanding my knowledge about the world and using this to think about how we have got to where we are as a country and planet today and how lessons from history can help inform us about what the future may hold. Studying history has helped me with my degree in many ways. The skills learnt from studying historical sources to find their meaning/opinion and extract useful information from them transfer well for the academic literature given to me at university. I am currently in my first year studying Politics and International relations at the University of York."

Q: What did our current yr13 students enjoy most about the course and department?

"I most enjoyed learning about how history has shaped the modern world and developing analysis skills"

"My favourite topic to learn was Tudors. Also the different ways of learning individually or as groups"

"I enjoyed learning not just about the general aspects of history but the deeper details and understanding how many different things can contribute to an outcome"

"Each course had its own chapter which the history department made worksheets for. The worksheets were good as it ensured that a student didn't miss out any important information. Cold War was also my favourite course as it was the most interesting out of the 3"

"The cold war was simply brilliant, i loved the clips and the interactive tasks. Also the history trip was not to be forgot and was very insightful"

"Being able to walk into a class on an average day and suddenly have learnt something fascinating and unforgettable"

"I enjoyed the Cold War the most, particularly the Vietnam and collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe topics. However, I also liked having the chance to work independently on the coursework."

"The independence we had when doing our coursework"

"The support has been great. Especially when having different teachers when attending subject support."

"There was plenty of support throughout each course. The subject supports ranged between help with essay skills and general knowledge so anything that someone struggled with was accommodated for."

"The staff are absolutely amazing- Allie is so caring and thoughtful! They are approachable and always happy to help."

"Fantastic – the support sessions were very helpful and there was always someone to ask for help on work, and to offer ways to improve. Lydia's one-to-one essay feedback was particularly helpful in learning what I needed to do to improve my next essay."

"Good – always available for support in college, lots of regular support sessions and extra help outside of these if you need them."

"Great support, couldn't ask for more."