



History FAQs

Will I have to write a lot in this subject?

Yes, there is a fair degree of writing involved in History as it is a subject with strong links to literacy as it is fundamentally an essay based subject. Each of the three exam papers involves extended writing and at the end of paper 1 (Medicine) paper 2 (British Depth Study - Early Elizabethan England) and paper 3 (Germany) there are 16 mark essays. Additionally 5% of the overall exam paper is given for spelling, punctuation and grammar. However don't let this put you off as we in the department give you lots of help and support with this and we really focus on key words and terminology which are at the root of high SPaG marks. Every year our students well exceed the national average results for marks on SPaG.

What are GCSE exam questions like in History?'

There are a range of questions based around factual recall, historical explanation, change and consequence as well as ones which evaluate historical statements and hypothesis. Initially some students can find the pressure of writing essays under timed conditions rather challenging. We therefore put a lot of emphasis on helping students get used to this including frequent timed exam question practice. In year 10 in particular we have allowed students initially to bring in notes and/or plans for timed essays until they get used to writing under exam conditions. We find this and other strategies we have in place really help.

Does the department provide much in terms of revision and support materials?

Yes, very much so. We have a wide range of supplementary resources which are available online through our google classrooms. In addition to this we have been making use of other resources such as ScreenCastify videos where department members produce videos in which we talk our students through exactly how to answer different types of exam questions. In addition to this there are electronic revision booklets available for every examined topic. These exist for all the examined units and subunits from Medieval Medicine in paper 1 to Weimar Germany in paper 3. We also make our students fully aware of published revision booklets which are also available.

What are History lessons like in years 10 and 11?'

We will carry on with the range of tasks and activities you have experienced at KS3. Discussion, debate, roleplay and group work will all continue as these are at the root of good History learning. Additionally the department very much values the importance of providing all of these learning opportunities in spite of the current restrictions and present shift to remote learning. We are keen on actively using technology such as Jamboard (the online interactive whiteboard which both students and teachers can use simultaneously) online mini whiteboards, interactive google docs etc to enhance learning. This is something we will strive to continue with going forwards both remotely and when we are back in the actual classroom.

I really enjoy History but I worry about all the facts and content I will have to learn

Don't worry. If you enjoy History then please join us for GCSE History. We are here to help and pride ourselves on being an inclusive department who are here to support students of all abilities to make substantial progress. We use resources and materials to support all ability ranges. We have also designed inclusive lessons with strategies in place, such as retrieval quizzes, to aid conceptual understanding and to promote active factual recall.

Can I take both History and Geography?

Yes absolutely. If you are very keen on both subjects then there is very much the option to take both. In fact the two complement each other a great deal at GCSE. There are many transferable skills between the two.