

History



at RHB Sixth Form

The study of History at A Level allows understanding of *a rapidly changing world*. *Covering over 200 years* with three taught units, each with a revolutionary theme, the course aims to create *independent* learners, *critical, reflective* thinkers and decision-makers – all personal assets that can make students stand out as they progress to higher education and the workplace.

'I highly enjoyed my time studying history at Royal High. The school offers an excellent range of resources, and my teachers were consistently responsive to my needs and provided a high quality of academic support. I developed essential skills such as essay-writing and critical thinking and I was encouraged to be open-minded and express my views in a welcoming and inclusive environment.'

(LILY, CLASS OF 2024, CURRENTLY STUDYING HISTORY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH)

COURSE OUTLINE

For our OCR History A Level we have selected three examined units which all centre on Revolutions: potent ideas of liberty and equality which challenged British rule over America and then crossed the Atlantic to pose serious questions to the British constitution and continued to reverberate through Europe, arguably culminating in the February Revolution in Russia in 1917.

Critical evaluation of contemporary source material and historians' interpretations are both key to assessments, as well as the ability to form clear, coherent arguments and reach supported judgements. Coursework is completed in Year 13: worth 20% of the A level this substantial essay allows students to explore a topic of interest to them in depth.

American Revolution 1740-1796 (15%)

This unit covers the development of America as a colony and its break away from British rule through to the establishment of the Republic. Assessment is by mini-essay '10-markers' and longer evaluative essays.

Britain in the Age of Revolution 1783-1850 (25%)

Complementing the American unit, we explore the challenges that a rapidly industrialising society posed to the political establishment. Specifically, we look at how governments reacted to the 'Age of Revolutions' and their approach to political and social reform. Students are assessed through the critical analysis of contemporary sources and evaluative essays.

Russia and its Rulers 1855-1964 (40%)

A thematic approach is crucial to this substantial paper that explores changes and continuities from Tsarist to Communist regimes. The revolutions of 1917 form a watershed but through analysis of Russian society, economy and governments, students will appreciate why Stalin can be called 'The Red Tsar'. Assessment requires students to grapple with historians' varied interpretations of events as well write synoptic essays that cover the entire 100 year period.

Coursework

(20%)

Using the skills developed across their other papers, students select a topic to research and write a 4,000 word essay. This must evaluate both varied historical interpretations of the past and conflicting contemporary evidence in order to reach a clear judgement.

IS THIS THE RIGHT COURSE FOR ME?

History at A level is suitable for those who enjoy learning about the past, and whilst having studied at GCSE level is of benefit, it is not a prerequisite. Textual analysis and fluent writing skills are both highly desirable, but most important is to enjoy setting out an argument and following it through to a thoroughly justified conclusion.

WHERE COULD THIS COURSE TAKE ME?

Further Education

Many of our students go on to study History at university but Law, International relations and Liberal Arts degrees are also very popular. Destinations of recent leavers include Oxford, Edinburgh, Exeter and Manchester.

Careers

History is a highly regarded academic subject and as such is the gateway to many professional careers most notably law, journalism and the media, politics and the Civil Service.

ENRICHMENT

Students are encouraged to join the Politics Society which collaborates with the Baldwin School, Philadelphia. The department also runs a biennial trip to Berlin which is open to all Sixth Form History students.

HEAD OF SUBJECT

Harriet Pagnamenta

EXAM BOARD

OCR



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