

HISTORY A Level

Course outline:

On this course we explore a wide range of fascinating historical narratives. Currently students study the Wars of the Roses (1450 – 1499) and the Age of the Crusades (1071 – 1204). Students also have the opportunity to do independent research through coursework which can be on a choice of periods including: the World Wars, the Roman Empire, the Tudors and 17th century England.

Year one

In this year we explore the wars between the Houses of York and Lancaster for the throne of medieval England, a series of events also known as The Wars of the Roses, York representing itself through the symbol of the white rose, and Lancaster through the red. It was this that inspired George R. Martins famous Game of Thrones. We start by asking ourselves what made a great medieval king? In what ways did the weaknesses of Henry VI leave the throne open to competition from others? We explore the actions, motives and lives of a number of fascinating characters such as Henry V, Richard Duke of York, Margaret Beaufort, Warwick ‘the Kingmaker’ and Edward IV. As well as studying a series of political and military events such as the battle of Towton and the usurpation of Henry VI. We finish with discussion of exactly how Henry Tudor, an obscure minor noble, managed to snatch the throne from the hands of the Yorkists ending this 35 year long conflict.

Year two

In this year students study the First to Fourth Crusades, the famous wars for the Holy Land initiated by Western Christendom in the 11th century, including their background contexts and aftermaths. This is a fascinating unit which gives students the opportunity to study the origins of modern terrorism, instability in the Middle East, and religious radicalism of both a Christian and Islamic nature. How did the Muslims react to Christian invasion? What truly happened between Richard the Lionheart King of England and the great Muslim leader Saladin? We also explore the role of women in the Holy Land, the economy, and the establishment and destruction of the Christian Kings of Jerusalem.

You need no previous knowledge to study this course but you will need a least a C grade in English and an interest in the past. We use a variety of teaching methods – explanation by teachers or through film, group work, individual research, university guest lectures, reading and essay writing, and trips.

Examination Board:

AQA

Duration:

Two years

Minimum entry requirements:

- Five GCSEs at Grades 4 – 9, preferably including English Language and History at Grade 5
- Adult students by negotiation

Possible combinations:

- Complements most arts/humanities subjects, such as Ancient History, English Language or Literature, modern languages, Sociology.
- History trip

Enrichment opportunities

- Trips to Oxford, Bath and London
- University study days with Winchester, Portsmouth and Southampton universities

Skills developed:

- Analysis of evidence, development of argument
- Appreciation of varying theories and interpretations
- Discussion, oral and written
- Evaluation of evidence
- Presentation, oral and written
- Research
- Teamwork

Likely next step opportunities:

- Higher Education for degree courses in History, or other subjects
- Career opportunities in archive or museum work, teaching, law and journalism
- Graduates in History are often recruited to managerial posts in business and industry

Assessment summary:

Examination and coursework

Which GCSEs will you need?

The GCSE results which will tell us if this course is the right one for you are:

- English Language/Literature
- History/Classical Civilisation
- Religious Studies
- Sociology