

A level History

Why study History?

- A Level History is a fantastic springboard for future personal and career development. We study people, events, processes, controversies and in doing so develop the skills of analysis, evaluation, reflection and empathy.
- History students learn how to select and prioritise information; support, justify and prioritise arguments; and the persuasive presentation of complex arguments with sensitivity. Students will need to be interested in people, their motivations and behaviour, and different societies. You will be expected to debate and develop your views around controversial historical topics.



Why study History at Solihull Sixth Form College?

- Students will be offered the chance to participate in appropriate study days and visits to places relevant to their course. We have visited Warwick University to attend lectures by eminent historians, London to a special session at the National Archives, and we also look to give students opportunities for trips abroad.
- We subscribe to key historical publications to widen historical awareness. The cost of additional activities is kept to a minimum.

Case Study

Among the recent successful students to have taken this course is **Steph Gordon**.



She came to the College from Alderbrook School and achieved all A and A* grades in English Literature, History and Fine Art. She has progressed to the University of Sheffield to study a Joint Honours degree in English and History.

“The best thing about studying here was the independence that college allowed and my confidence really grew because of this. My teachers were always willing to support me as they were as motivated as the students and I felt that they were truly invested in my progress!”

- student Steph Gordon



Course Outline

British History – 1547–1603: the Later Tudors

Students will be taken on a journey from the end of the reign of Henry VIII when England was left in the hands of a boy king Edward, the Catholic Mary Tudor and the legendary Elizabeth I. This period will be assessed by a question which involves the use of primary sources based around debates.

The second topic studies Elizabethan England. The themes to be explored are Religion, Government, Economic and Social affairs. The course culminates with a study of the years 1588-1603 when students will look at the “Golden Age” of Elizabethan England and investigate how “Golden” it really was. This second topic will be assessed by a written essay in the exam and accounts for 25% of the A Level.

European History – Democracy and Dictatorship in Germany 1919-63

This unit focuses on the building and strength of democracy in Germany, before and after World War 2. The rise of dictatorships in the 1930s and in East Germany after World War 2 is also explored, as is the nature of society and the economy in democratic and dictatorial societies. This is an essay based paper and accounts for 15% of the A Level.

Thematic Study – Russia and its Rulers 1855-1964

Students study Russia and its rulers in a broad study of change and continuity over 100 years in the nature of Russian rulers, from Tsars to Commissars. The changes and continuity in social policy, economic policy and the style of government are also taught, as are issues around reform, reaction and success in war. Three in-depth case studies of events, individuals or issues develop a student's ability to evaluate different views in History. This is the exam that carries the most marks and will include a written interpretation question and two essays and accounts for 40% of the A Level.

Coursework

Students complete a personal investigation of a controversy from one of the examination units in a 3-4,000 word personal investigation. Developing university level research, selection and interpretation skills they will evaluate (primary) sources and (secondary) historians' interpretations to develop an answer that addresses the historical debate or controversy and accounts for 20% of the A Level.

Assessment

Coursework (20%)

Examination (80%)

Examining Board – OCR.

Special Entry Requirements

Students must have grade 4 or above in History if they have taken it at GCSE. It is not necessary however to have studied History at GCSE. In addition, standard A level entry requirements apply - www.solihullsf.ac.uk/courses/entry-requirements.

Prohibited Options

None.

What do our students go on to do?

History is a facilitating subject which encourages skills of comprehension, analysis and evaluation which are particularly valued by universities and employers alike. Careers in the media, business and management, the civil service, public relations and personnel are all open to you, and History is considered particularly helpful if you are intending to study Law at University. History teachers support students to complete Extended Projects, university entrance essays and examinations.

Cost Implications

Visits to places of interest usually incur travel costs only. No trips are compulsory. The department will supply a wide range of personalised study packs and textbooks that will include standard class resources and extension material to encourage stretch and challenge.

Complementary Subjects or Enrichment Courses

All History courses are traditionally linked with subjects such as Politics, Sociology, English, Economics, Law and Religious Studies and there are sound reasons for these combinations. However, our experience has shown that scientists find History an ideal companion subject, with a complementary enhancement of logical thinking.

Examination Results

In the past three years, there has been great success for students on this course, including consistently high pass rates. The full breakdown of results is as follows:

Year	Entry	A*	A	B	C	D	E	U	A-E%
2018	128	3	16	27	37	37	6	2	98.4%
2019	129	4	16	49	34	22	3	1	99.2%
2020	104	5	18	41	23	15	2	0	100.0%

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